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ABSTRACT

Based on the realization that 20 years of educational development efforts in Latin America have had little result, this author identified problems in educational administration at the national and regional levels that are largely responsible for the lack of progress. A number of structural and legal problems were identified, including the needlessly complicated structure of educational administration, a surfeit of regulations, obsolete laws, red tape, and overrigid centralization. Unproductive practices related to administrative personnel were pinpointed, including the selection of administrators with very little training in administration from the ranks of teachers. Some deficiencies identified in regional and local organization included the lack of authority of regional administrative offices and the lack of involvement of individual schools in planning and decision-making. The organization of the inspectorate was seen as impeding progress, partly because inspectors have an overwhelming accumulation of disparate duties and little training or support. Finally, difficulties regarding administrative aspects of the planning process were looked at, including isolation of the planning unit, lack of meetings of the senior officers, and lack of expertise among some staff members. Suggestions to remedy these problems emphasized that administrative reform should be a prime component of educational development planning. (Author/JM)

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THE ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1. The problem

The Latin-American educational scene, to those who have followed its development during the last two decades, presents a rather discouraging picture: twenty years of efforts directed at developing the educational services through the use of educational planning techniques seem to have been a comparative failure, at least by the yardstick of the expectations and hopes that arose after 1958 (1).

The first outcome that was expected from redirecting and rationalizing national endeavours with the help of planning was the effective extension of school services to the whole population: the moment had arrived, or so it seemed, to reach those sectors which, after nearly a century of legally 'compulsory' primary education, were still deprived of schooling. And the growth of the primary level was indeed impressive, particularly between 1956 and 1968, thanks to the impulse given by the so-called 'Major Project' sponsored by UNESCO and coordinated from its Regional Office at Santiago de Chile.

Between 1960 and 1965 only, enrolment at this level increased by over 31 per cent (from 27 600 000 to 36 200 000 in round figures: 5.6 per cent per year); schools became available in rural areas where they had never existed.

In the following five years there was a similar increase (30.3 per cent, or 5.4 per cent per year, for an enrolment of 47 150 000). However, demographic growth - around 3 per cent annually, the highest in the world - reduced by half the net effect of this growth. After 1970 the increase continued but with less momentum (3.9 per cent per year till 1975, to a total enrolment of 57 200 000), while demographic growth remained practically unchanged. At present, the countries that have reached virtual total coverage of school-age children are still very few. Particularly (but not exclusively) in countries with a high percentage of Indian popula-

(1) This was the year of the Washington Seminar on Educational Planning, convened by UNESCO and the O.A.S., which began the rapid spread of the 'planning' approach to educational development throughout Latin America.

tion, there are still large rural areas, and not a few 'marginal' ones in urban zones, where there is still no primary education, or where the existing schools cannot accommodate more than a fraction of the children.

The growth of secondary education was more than twice that of primary, in percentage terms: between 1960 and 1975, global enrolment grew by 380 per cent (from 3 186 000 to 12 151 000) at a yearly rate that varied between 8.3 and 10.4 per cent (1). The expansion of secondary education enjoyed in most cases the highest priority, because of a growing conviction that, whatever the quality of primary education, the first level of formal schooling was quite inadequate for the bulk of the population to be able to make a positive contribution to economic life in the second half of the twentieth century. This belief led to several countries raising the completion of compulsory, free education by about three years, thus taking in the first cycle of secondary school.

However, the countries are still exceptional where secondary school enrolment, or at least enrolment in the said first cycle, has succeeded in covering over half the population of the corresponding age. The second cycle of this level enrolls only a minority in all countries. And, for those who belong to the current of thought which holds that 'preparing for life' at school should essentially mean 'training for productive work', there is a still more serious deficiency: almost everywhere the traditional, 'academic' stream of secondary education still dominates the so-called 'vocational' streams (agricultural, industrial or business education), which represented in 1975 only 22 per cent of the enrolment, a decrease from 25 per cent in 1960 (2).

Secondary-school enrolment covering only a minority is found even in countries where virtually all children enter primary school, and nearly all those who finish this level have secondary schools within reach. The explanation is well known: i.e. the high attrition rate, consisting of both repeaters and drop-outs. There are no more than a couple of

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(1) All these figures are taken from the XXXVI International Conference of Education, UNESCO, Geneva, 1977.

(2) "Educational Statistics of Latin America and the Caribbean Region", UNESCO, Regional Office of Education, Santiago Chile, January 1976 (a document prepared for the Panama "Meeting on the implementation of the Conference of Ministers held in Venezuela in 1971")

countries in the whole region where those successfully completing primary school comprise more than half the cohort who entered some six years earlier; in extreme cases, enrolment even in the 2nd grade is just half that of the year before. And the attrition rates are similar in secondary school, especially in the first two years. It has apparently been impossible to eradicate or mitigate this incredibly high rate of failure in Latin America; a continent that has the sad distinction of exceeding in this respect every other region in the world (1). One must add that this fact has not prompted the necessary efforts, commensurate with the gravity of the situation, to investigate the causes and find an effective cure.

It could be held a priori, however, that one of the factors contributing to this prevalent fault in our school systems is the very small, sometimes ridiculous, proportion of children who receive pre-school training (almost never more than 20 per cent, usually much less). The 'kindergarten', which is left mainly to private initiative, benefits only a small number in urban areas, and is virtually unknown in rural ones. Thus most children enter the strange world of the formal school (quite remote, culturally speaking, from their social and family environment) in clearly unfavourable conditions, and predisposed to failure.

The last remark leads us to the qualitative aspects of the situation, which are the most frequent targets of public complaints and expert criticism, and to which planning theory pays special attention. From one point of view, such criticism is unfair and shows little understanding of the considerable progress most Ministries in the region have made these last ten to fifteen years to institutionalize the pursuit of improvement of quality. A glance at the organizational arrangements of many Ministries to compare the situation now with that of a decade ago, reveals significant differences, consisting mainly of the creation of Departments and Directorates specifically devoted to qualitative development. Before that time, in fact, the typical Ministry of Education included offices of only two sorts: the classical 'administrative' organs (dealing with personnel, budget and accounting, supplies, building and maintenance, etc) and the machinery of school inspection, both general and by specialities, organized

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(1) In the Report of the Geneva Conference already cited, it is estimated that only 41 per cent of Latin American children having entered school in 1970 reached the 5th grade. The same estimate for Africa is 64 per cent.

in descending hierarchical steps down to the individual school. Such a structure was very revealing as regards the true permanent interest of the Ministry: i.e. to maintain and to expand the system as it was. And when, from time to time, it became impossible not to make some qualitative change (usually, a rather cosmetic 'reform of syllabuses'), special committees and work-groups had to be set up, since the standing organization of the Ministry was prepared to deal with everything except pedagogy.

The present situation is sharply different. Besides the Planning Offices, which often tackle qualitative problems (mainly the structure of the school system), there are everywhere permanent departments, called Curriculum, Pedagogy, or Teacher Guidance, etc., whose permanent task is to modernize curricula, methodology, teaching materials, evaluation systems, teacher improvement, and so on; and the techniques they use are considerably more up-to-date than only ten years ago. But it most be pointed out that most teacher-training institutions have for a much longer time been disseminating modern ideas (mostly imported, alas!) concerning vital aspects of educational quality - mainly teaching methods and materials, including sometimes quite advanced technologies.

But nevertheless ... apart from a handful of 'pilot' schools, or experimental projects, or some exceptional private schools, a visit to a sample of ordinary schools and colleges throughout the continent would be enough to show the continuing predominance of rote learning, the passivity of students subjected to verbalist teaching, the narrowness of information which does not go further than the textbook or the teacher's dictation, the prevalence of external motivation (marks and examinations) instead of curiosity to learn, the blanket uniformity with which the students are treated, whatever their geographical, cultural and socio-economic differences, and so on. No sophisticated research is needed to establish that school libraries are few, poorly equipped, and are neglected in day-to-day teaching; that in the rural areas, the most basic teaching equipment is usually missing; that school premises are still being built according to a rigid, passive conception of learning; that the awakening of critical, creative thought processes is the last preoccupation of teachers; that, in short, the students may be learning a number of things, but do not learn to learn, and much less to develop the kind of personality that could successfully face life in an age of changes and thus contribute to the development of the country.

Indeed, the qualitative shortcomings are much more than continued ignoring of modern (and no-so-modern) pedagogy, as spelled out by internationally-known authors. The least satisfying feature, according to generalized complaints and criticisms, is that institutional education lives on and develops itself isolated from the genuine needs of these countries, whose stage of development is at the present time rather particular(1).

It is hardly necessary to recall the radical criticism of schooling that, parallel to the writings of Everett Reimers and other authors of developed countries, has gathered momentum in recent years all through Latin America - a criticism that sometimes sounds very much like desperation. From this type of deeply-engaged position there has emerged a number of extremely interesting attempts in the direction of non-formal, 'de-scholarized' education. Also, among those who are realistic enough to recognize that school is <u>not</u> dead nor dying, there has been a surge of genuinely Latin-American innovations, directed to radically changing the school from inside, in the direction of a true 'development education'.

Among such attempts to renew schooling, the most systematic has been the 'Pedagogy of Total Language', or 'Pedagogy of Communication', which has taken root in a number of educational centres in half a dozen countries of the region (2); and a similar inspiration - although seldom as radical and systematic - is to be found in several of the 'nuclearization' programmes that will be briefly described later (3). It is symptomatic, however, that the official systems, i.e. the Ministries of Education, should have taken an attitude of mere tolerance towards such initiatives, or sometimes it is purely verbal support, not followed by any serious attempt to extend them systematically to the whole of formal education. Or it may be that, when the innovation becomes an official programme (as in the case of 'nuclei'), it becomes attenuated and distorted in the field, either through concessions to the old ways or because of lack of continuity.

Finally, there is a significant aspect of this qualitative deviation of formal education from the needs of development which cannot be omitted,

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(1) See explanation in the next chapter.

(2) See the chapter by C.E. Olivera, in "Emerging Development Education in the Americas", a three-nation study, compiled and edited by Stacy Churchill and Vincent D'Oyley; UNESCO-Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (to be published); and the bibliography cited therein.

(3) See Ch. IV, Section 3.

although it has seldom been studied in this connection. I am alluding to the deep insecurity, noticeable in every country in the area, of the role of technical and technological training within the school system. At the root lies a lack of clarity regarding at least three distinct needs of modern life. First, the need for each individual to be familiar with the correct use and maintenance of a large number of products and appliances of daily life, based on an elementary knowledge of science and scientific processes (mathematics, physics and electricity, biology, industrial chemistry ...). Secondly, the need for society to have sufficient numbers and variety of good-quality specialists in a range of techniques related to the production and distribution of goods and services, from the level of scientific and technological research to that of the skilled worker. Finally, the 'cultural' need, for both the individual and society at large, to understand and 'dominate' the technological world, to feel the masters and not the slaves of it, for reasons of mental health, as well as in order to respond positively to the changes that rapidly-developing technologies will continue to bring about in the future.

As a rule, our school systems try to satisfy only the second of these needs - with partial success and a lot of wastage - through the so-called 'technical' or 'vocational' high schools; but the latter's functions and field of competence are not always very clear in relation to the role of Universities, Technological Institutes, and training centres for various trades. This is not the place to analyze this difficult issue in depth. We may only remark that the root of the confusion lies in the simplistic adoption of occupational categories and training methodologies which originated in developed, highly-industrialized countries. There is a lack of analysis of the national situation - at present and in the foreseeable future - concerning the actual categories of jobs, as well as the types of technology best adapted to the country's development.

As for the other two needs, they are usually neglected to a large extent. Of course, in the curricula of general education there are always courses or activities of the old-type "manual work", more or less disguised under modern names (like 'Industrial Arts'). Such courses are for the most part very poor and out-of-date in both content and methodology, among other reasons, because the few national experts in such matters are absorbed by the sub-systems of 'technical colleges', which are considered

as more 'serious'. Finally, neither this sort of 'second-class' teaching, nor the specialized technical training offered in the vocational colleges, make the least attempt to satisfy the third need indicated above, the deepest of the three: the need for modern man intellectually and practically to face the all-pervading technology.

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To sum up: after twenty years of efforts to develop formal education with the help of officially-adopted planning techniques, average results are well below expectations, so that there is a widespread - and growing - feeling of dissatisfaction among ordinary 'users' of the school system, as well as in the educated strata of Latin American societies.

2. The institutional setting

In other parts of the world, where most States have only recently come into being, the failures and delays in educational development may be attributed basically to the lack of a national tradition of institutional and administrative organization, capable of adequately dealing with such an enormous and complex task. In Latin America, on the contrary, the school systems managed by the Ministries of Education have long been under the care of apparently powerful and amply-staffed administrations, at least at the central level. The comparative failure we have succintly outlined above has happened under the leadership of an administrative system which at first sight seems to possess all the essential conditions of success:

- Almost everywhere, Planning Offices were established in a central position in the Ministry's structure, with easy access to the highest decision-making levels, and - at least for a time - enjoyed special prestige as experts in somewhat mysterious techniques. The exceptions are Argentina and Brazil, where the size and complexity of Government machinery prevented any single Office from undertaking such a central role, but both countries do have Planning Offices for different sectors and levels of education, and a Federal Ministry or Secretariat for global planning where the educational sector is integrated. The situation in El Salvador is also exceptional, in that the most far-reaching

reforms were made after eliminating the Planning Office. However, the planning function was explicitly fulfilled by means of other structures.

- All the administrations have a sizeable proportion of experienced officers, many of them with good formal training; throughout twenty years, this proportion has grown steadily, particularly at the higher and middle levels and in the Planning Offices themselves.
- The Ministries of Education are responsible for one of the largest budgets in Central Government with only a few exceptions; in some countries, the Education budget is the largest of all the Ministries.
- Throughout this period, the Ministries of Education had at their disposal a significant, sometimes very large, amount of international technical assistance, often integrated with various forms of financial aid. In particular, UNESCO assistance was more often than not centred around planning issues; but more specific aid programmes of O.A.S., the World Bank, the Inter-American Bank, and dozens of bilateral agreements with developed countries, were often arranged on the same basis.
- Finally, with all these resources, countries in the area have produced - under different names - educational development plans, based on rather accurate diagnoses. They were often worked out with the help of quite advanced techniques so that several of these plans have attracted particular attention from foreign scholars and international bodies.

Under such conditions, it was impossible not to get some positive results and we have seen that progress has been far from negligible. Global outcomes, however, are still perceived as disappointing, not only according to the more or less superficial complaints of the general public, whose permanent dissatisfaction could be ascribed to an intrinsic trait of human nature, but also according to the evaluations and criticisms of specialists and other knowledgeable people. Even the Ministries of Education usually acknowledge that results are too poor when seen against the amount of money and efforts spent.

Who, or what, is to blame for this? There is no doubt that the plans themselves are open to criticism, not so much on the technical side but perhaps because of the rather poor models that were often followed. These were dependent on the economic approach to planning, and consequently rather shallow from an educational point of view. This fact is noticeable sometimes in the very structure of the basic documents, which lack a basic educational concept around which everything else could be properly organized. The deficiencies of the model are often also reflected in the diagnosis, insofar as it does not go very deep into the roots of the specific educational situation of the indicators used, some are strictly economic (and intended as a "background" that the educators do not know how to use), while others measure only the most obvious, superficial variables - i.e. those that international organizations have popularized because they can be applied to many countries for the purposes of comparison.

This author has himself tried in several countries to make the most of such indicators, sometimes taking them to the point where they strongly suggest the need for deeper studies, in which value judgements of a qualitative nature have to be given priority over statistical data and inferences. There is, however, a widespread reluctance, in most Ministries of Education, to enter this unexplored field. This may be because they feel unequal to a task that would call for really interdisciplinary team-work where educators are at a disadvantage and feel ill at ease, or because they have perhaps uneasy feelings that such studies would lead to challenging the whole school-system concept to a degree they are not prepared to face.

However, within such limitations of scope, planning itself has usually not been too bad: i.e. the diagnosis was correct as far as it went, the goals and priorities were chosen wisely enough within those limits, and the main programmes of action were rather well-suited to the level of needs. Logically the plans should have had more impact than they did in fact have.

It is at this point of analysis that it becomes clear that where plans almost uniformly went wrong was in the <u>implementation</u> stage: understanding by this sometimes inaccurately-used word, not the actual attainment of goals, but rather:

- the detailed prpearation of specific projects by which the larger objectives and programmes will be achieved;

- the logistic arrangements which should guarantee that the right personnel and the right resources will be present at the right place at the right moment; and

- the whole set of procedures needed for the execution of plans: budgetary assignments, definite distribution of responsibilities, personnel training and/or refreshing, as well as the detailed provisions for a system of formative evaluation, supported by open communication channels allowing for continuous feedback.

This means that the shortcomings seem to lie in those areas for which the administrative machinery, rather than the planning process, was mainly responsible. Both aspects are of course inseparable in a well-arranged organization, but, to whichever of the two institutional sub-systems the fault is attributed, administrative performance remains open to question. In the following pages, therefore, it is proposed to subject the administrative side of educational development planning to scrutiny.

I. THE LATIN AMERICAN BACKGROUND

1. Why make a special study of the Latin American background?

For over twenty years now, since the "ecological" approach to development administration was first propounded by Frederick Riggs (1), it has been accepted that knowledge of the cultural environment (social values, symbols and structures, as well as the political system, the economic organization, etc.) is essential to an understanding of a country's public administration system. The whole outlook of the sciences of public administration and management ("development administration" as opposed to "maintenance administration") was changed by this school of thought, which placed such issues as administrative structure, techniques, personnel and communications in a wider context. Appraisal of the real possibilities for educational administration to successfully carry out development policies, and to implement specific projects, must be made first of all against the cultural background. This gives meaning to the more detailed discussions concerning organizational structures, budget preparation and implementation, technical abilities of the personnel, effectiveness of communications, and so on.

This contextual perspective, in my view, has been conspicuously absent in the literature about educational planning and implementation in Latin American countries. The vast majority of recent studies on these matters, whether they come from prominent scholars, University research teams, or international organizations, draw heavily on the experience, either of the developed countries of the Northern hemisphere, or of the new states of Asia and Africa: and in both cases the political, social, economic and cultural outlook is quite different from that prevailing in Latin America. Moreover, even when a Latin American country happened to be the object of such a study (Cuba, Peru: the "revolutionary" exceptions of the continent), little effort was made to apply the contextual approach to their educational administration. Added to this, such studies have mostly been the work of English-speaking authors, or sometimes of other

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(1) See Peter W. Rodman, "Development administration: obstacles, theories, and implications for planning"; IIEP Occasional Paper No. 2, 1968; sections 2 and 3.

Europeans, whose own cultural background inevitably colours their views on general theories as well as their appraisal of specific situations.

There was, in fact, a flurry of interest in the early experiences of Latin countries in the field of educational planning during the late 50's and early 60's, when some of them - more or less prodded by UNESCO - were the first to try out systematic planning of education. This happened, however, before development administration theories had won acceptance and, of course, before these planning experiences had had time to develop to a point where systematic evaluation could be carried out in order to verify existing theories on educational management or to build up new ones. In later years, the attention of scholars was powerfully and understandably drawn to the phenomenon of the emergence from colonialism of a large number of African and Asian states (1). At about the same time, the theory of the "Third World", born in the late 50's, rapidly gained ground, which helped in understanding the global situation of the world, but also led to excessively simplified views and thus obscured differences among under-developed regions of the world.

From then on, and for the purpose of this kind of study, Latin America was simply lumped together with all new countries. International seminar papers and other scholarly works are thus full of sweeping generalizations (such as "in most less-developed countries ...") which are supposed to apply with only minor adjustments to well over one hundred countries in all parts of the world, but which were in fact thought out in the context of the struggles of Asian and African countries to become modern states. Little wonder then that theories of development, and particularly the management of educational development, should have left Latin American administrators, first baffled, and then considerably sceptical - feeling deprived of reliable theories and practical orientations.

It is my contention that in Latin America, notwithstanding the considerable differences among the 19 countries here considered (2), there

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(1) In fact, Latin American countries made up nearly half the initial number of U.N.(and UNESCO) members. By 1965 they had dwindled to less than 20 per cent and in 1979 they are only 13 per cent. They are no longer, in international power politics, a source of potential worries that could command preferential attention.

(2) Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

exist a number of common features that - besides geography - set them apart, as a group, both from the industrialized world, and from the countries that only after World War II either acquired independence or started to assert themselves as active parties in the international scene - in other words, most of Asia and Africa. A better defined view of the common features shared by the countries of Latin America should not only improve understanding of their problems in planning and especially in implementing educational reforms, thus helping to refine current theories, but also increase the chances for contributing in a practical way to a solution of those problems.

Which are then the common characteristics of Latin American countries that place them half-way in the continuum between the developed world and the Third World countries of other continents?

2. The overall features (1)

The first fact to be recalled is that the Latin American countries, though of course much younger than most Western European states, ceased to be colonies and reached statehood over 150 years ago (1810-1821) - only a little later than the U.S.A., and before Germany or Italy (2). Even allowing for the decades of internal struggles that for many of them delayed their organization as modern States until the second half of the century, their State machinery has been functioning for over a century: i.e. long before anybody even considered the possibility of the Asian and African colonies becoming independent States (some of them had not been colonized yet), and many decades and two World Wars before the abstract notion of world solidarity had resulted in a system of international assistance for development.

(1) Some of the points that are made in this section may seem too obvious to deserve recalling; certainly there is nothing new in them. They are, however, all too frequently overlooked by many writers (even those who are familiar with the Latin American scene) when analyzing administrative problems. Moreover they are not usually considered together, as a consistent picture, against which administrative issues can be appraised.

(2) The one exception is Cuba, which gained independence from Spain much later (1898) only to come under the overwhelming influence of the U.S. for the next sixty years. That is perhaps why the Castro regime has been able to awaken a sense of urgency about nation-building akin to some ex-colonial countries of other continents.

Perhaps more important for our purpose here is the fact that in these countries the State machinery, striving at that time to combine the legalistic approach inherited from Spain and Portugal with the more efficiency-minded models of Britain and France, too often managed to incorporate the wrong features of both: putting all kinds of spokes in the wheels of efficiency for the sake of procedure, and then bending or trampling over essential laws in the name of political expediency.

It has been observed (1) that in some respects the administrative outlook of Latin American countries is in worse shape than in many recent ex-colonies: at least in the latter, direct foreign rule resulted in the establishment of a better-organized administration, reasonably efficient in the performance of "maintenance" duties, if still quite inadequate to the new role of development. In Latin America both roles are sadly deficient.

The issue of efficacy in development tasks is linked with the professional origin of higher-level administrators. In the developed countries, the old predominance of lawyers is a thing of the past: these posts are mostly filled with people whose basic training has been in economics, sometimes in sociology, or specifically in administration. In the ex-colonies, on the other hand, similar posts had to go to people of almost any origin, often with little academic background, and including a good sprinkling of teachers. In Latin America the substitution of economists and generally of social scientists for lawyers has just begun, except in a few more advanced countries where this movement started earlier.(2)

Now, it must be recalled that in Latin countries "law" used to mean basically Roman law as interpreted by the Napoleonic Code; however much of this may have changed lately, it has left a tradition of punctiliousness frequently at odds with real-life needs and urgencies - much more so than in the British tradition which permeates a great part of the "technical assistance" movement, especially at the academic level. This is

(1) By Albert Waterston, "Development planning: lessons of experience"; The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1965, pp. 249-251.

(2) The exception is of course educational administration, which is almost universally reserved to ex-teachers.

another cause of misunderstanding, and it might explain, at least partially, the scant results of administrative technical assistance to Latin America in the last twenty years.

In any case, although in most countries of this continent the political regimes have repeatedly changed from democratic to dictatorial and back, the administrative system has remained much the same, undergoing no more - and perhaps less - change than its counterparts in the industrial countries. Superficial changes are of course very frequent but they are only formalistic: regrouping or sub-dividing Ministries, upgrading and downgrading directorates and departments, and so on. But this does not change administrative methods to any substantial extent and has usually very little effect on efficiency. This deep stability amidst superficial change means that the administrative situation in Latin America cannot be compared with the relative fluidity prevailing in other countries where this machinery is either new, or had to be re-started when the colonial powers left and the higher posts had to be filled with more or less inexperienced personnel possessing little legal training.

In short: public administration in the Latin American countries - and this of course includes educational administration - is much more solidly entrenched and more difficult to reform than in most of the Third World, and even more than in the developed countries.

A much deeper issue is the psycho-sociological motivation for change, whether in the administrators themselves or in society at large. Here the essential fact is that, by and large, the Latin American countries have not had to face, and certainly are not facing now, the task of "nation-building" - i.e. of forging a cultural identity within their frontiers, like most of the ex-colonies which reached independence after 1945. In this continent national identities were slowly forged during the three centuries of Spanish and Portuguese rule, on the basis of a mixture of European and Indian blood (with some African blood in some places), the same religion, the same language (except for Brazil), and the same type of government. Differences between countries arose mainly from the enormous distances and, to some extent from the kind of economic activities, which in turn gave the basis for colonial administrative divisions. Thus, only about twenty years after independence, the political sub-division of the ex-Spanish Empire was established as it is today, and only comparatively minor boundary problems remained. A few countries, however (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador,

Guatemala, to some extent Mexico) include to this day a majority or a large minority of Indian population, linguistically and culturally non-assimilated but, for good or for evil, this fact is scarcely noticeably at the level of State administration, which is unquestionably in the hands of white or assimilated populations with a strong sense of nationality. Moreover, in the last century or so, most of Latin America (and especially the southernmost countries: Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile) received and assimilated a very large influx of immigrants, overwhelmingly European, which had the effect of accentuating the overall European outlook of these societies.

Thus, in contrast with Asia and Africa, their system of values is essentially Western, except for the more or less large pockets of Indian population. In this respect the differences with Europe and the U.S.A., although far from negligible (1), are of minor importance when compared to the cultural gulf which in other continents divided the colonial powers from their subjects. Other colonial powers dominated existing societies; the Spanish and Portuguese, like the English and French in North America, created a new one - on the basis of their own values and system of life.

In fact, the main differences in the cultural outlook between Latin America and the industrial countries of the West derive from the economy. In this respect, of course, the Latin American countries are far from homogeneous; for instance, their per capita GNP ranges from approximately US $ 300 to 2 000, and their rates of industrialization are enormously different. However, in a world list of countries according to GNP, they tend to cluster in the middle range, far behind the leading industrial powers but well above a large number of less-developed countries. Budgetwise, then, it may be said that educational administrators usually find themselves in a difficult but not a desperate position. But the point to be made here is that the cultural differences we are talking about have lately become progressively more marked as the economic development of the industrial world outpaces the progress of South and Middle America. Indeed it is easily forgotten in Europe today that, only a few decades ago, most economic and social indicators were clearly higher in some Latin American countries than in quite a few countries of Southern Europe. If the "three-world" notion had appeared only half a century ago, most probably

(1) E.g.: the value ascribed to work, to time, to money ...

Argentina, Uruguay, and possibly Brazil and Chile would have been included in the "first world". The collective feeling of frustration at having been progressively out-distanced in the last thirty years is a psycho-social trait of the utmost importance for understanding the present political and social unrest of several countries of the region.

In any case, whatever these differences may be, it is also a fact that the successive ideological waves which originated in the "Old Continent" over the last two centuries (rationalism, liberalism, positivism, Marxism, and so on) immediately crossed the Atlantic and were variously reflected in the methods of governments, universities and whole societies of the New Continent. Now, lest it be argued that such ideological currents were only the appanage of the upper classes, it must be said that the same was true in Europe. The class structure of Latin America, while differing in the numerical proportion of the various classes, was fundamentally the same - the Indian sections excepted. Once again, this situation - immensely important from the point of view of education - makes of Latin America a reality that cannot be approached in the same way as the rest of the "Third World". Its differences with the developed world are of degree, not of kind as in the case of other continents.

Finally, one complementary feature which sets Latin America quite apart from the rest of the less-developed countries is of course the community of language. Not only is there no problem of choosing an official language - the same for 18 countries out of 19 (1) - but this really is the language of the people, their mother tongue. One language for 18 nations, instead of 18 or more languages for a single State: this represents a potential for development and an advantage for education not always fully understood. There is a drawback, however, in that this fact has had a prejudicial side-effect in the modern world: as, on one side, people do not need foreign languages to communicate with their neighbours, and as, furthermore, Spanish and Portuguese are not the languages of today's economic powers, only a fraction of the modern literature on administration, economy, education, etc., (2) becomes available to the managers of all aspects of Latin American life, thus increasing the intellectual gap - and therefore the gap in development.

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(1) And the Portuguese language of Brazil presents no real communication problem between educated people of this country and its neighbours.

(2) This of course applies to publications by UNESCO and the IIEP.

3. Common features in educational systems

Turning now specifically to the educational sector, the first thing to be noted is that the formal educational systems of Latin America are virtually as old as those of Europe. In colonial times, each colony had the same sort of educational institutions as Spain and Portugal - if no better, scarcely worse: a scattering of elementary schools in all the main population centres, and over half a dozen universities altogether. When State educational systems were invented and implanted in Europe, these countries had already become independent; and, sharing the same current ideologies, they made haste to copy such systems (1). Thus, if the Latin American educational systems may be said to have been imported, not home-grown, at least this happened through a series of national decisions, and not because of any imposition on the part of the colonial powers as was the case, much more recently, in other continents.

Later these systems underwent mainly the same sequence of crises and transformations as their European counterparts, although with important philosophical and methodological additions from the United States - thus growing slowly more different from each other and from the European model. It is symptomatic, however, that no Latin American country ever adopted the North American type of curriculum organization and administrative organization: the cultural ideals and standards were those of Europe, not of the U.S.A.

One consequence of this fact is, of course, that nowadays these educational systems are practically as difficult to reform, as allergic to change, as those in Western Europe. After all, their basic curricular structure, although not so strictly national as it has become in each European country, was not superimposed from outside either, so that it is not seen as something alien that must be rejected in favour of an "indigenous" organization. The same holds true of their administrative arrangements. Sociologists may well point to the intrinsic "foreignness" of such systems, and make clear that they sprang originally from a XIXth-century type of class structure which now clashes with the democratic

(1) One instance: universal primary education was systematized in France through the "loi Ferry" in 1882; a similar law was introduced in Argentina ("ley 1420") in 1884, another in Costa Rica ("ley de D. Mauro Fernandez") in 1886, and so on. Indeed the French system was the main source of inspiration for virtually all L.A. educational systems in the second half of the XIXth century; and French educators were often imported to start educational centres, especially at the secondary level.

aspirations of Latin American people. Psycho-sociologists will answer that for the educated classes of the continent at least, after more than a century, their educational system - whatever its faults - is felt as a substantial component of the national heritage. And these are the social groups which in fact manage education, not the masses for which such a system is radically inadequate - a fact of which they are totally unaware. Thus, partial (not necessarily "cosmetic") reforms are apt to be welcomed as improvements to the cherished school system; radical transformations, on the contrary, will be strongly opposed as alien to the nationality. Once again, this appears much closer to the European situation than to that of the Third World.

Several other facts point in the same direction. For instance, whereas many African and some Asian countries still have to rely on expatriate teachers - who are more likely to introduce innovations - to man their educational centres, especially at the middle and higher levels, in Latin America this stage has been over for many decades. The situation is rather that of a surplus of teachers in some parts. On the other hand, there is very often a need for inputs of highly-qualified personnel to counteract the tendency to a "provincial" outlook; but this is not always recognized.

More important to our purpose is to consider the comparative "insulation" of Latin American educational spheres with respect to official State ideologies. Being usually much older and enjoying much wider social acceptance than any political party, the school system is able successfully to defy any ideological imposition from the Government of the day, even when the latter is a military dictatorship (1). The most an ordinary government can hope to achieve in this direction is to "neutralize" some particular ideology - if it is not too widespread - through disciplinary measures or police action against the groups professing it. This is certainly more than can be done in Western Europe or the U.S.A., but it is far less than the common practice in most of the Third World - or the Second, for that matter. It must be borne in mind that this issue of ideology

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(1) The one exception is again Cuba, partly for the reasons indicated above (p. 2, footnote 5). A similar attempt in Peru did not succeed; nor did Peron in Argentina many years back (1952-55). In other countries teachers are being persecuted right now because of their ideas and political action; but this <u>suppression</u> of ideology is a different thing from <u>imposing</u> one and the same State ideology.

concerns not only the instructional contents, but may affect some administrative changes as well: e.g., the organization of (usually rural) schools in "nuclei" has sometimes been devised not so much as a way to raise the level of education as for the purpose of divulging the official ideology - and to that extent it has suffered the same setbacks from a strongly organized teaching body.

This matter is thus related to another feature of the Latin American educational world, namely, the comparative power of the teachers' unions. Whereas in most of the "new" countries such unions are too feeble (but so are all or most of Western-style social groupings) to effectively check the attempts of a powerful Government (1), and whereas in the developed world these unions do not usually work very much with industrial workers' unions, in Latin America the situation is different in both respects. Not only do the teachers as a body usually belong to one or more well-organized unions, but such unions are often the largest and most powerful professional organizations (as well as the politically most aware) in countries where the industrial sector is still very small, and the peasants are too uneducated (and/or prevented by law) to form such unions (2).

As regards the implementation of reforms, therefore, compliance with the orders or directives emanating from the Ministry of Education becomes problematic in the face of a very critical attitude on the part of teachers and lower-level administrators; as critical as in Europe, if not more (since rationality, which may be the basis of such orders, is less appreciated). It follows that the inertia of the system in relation to substantial change is very great, certainly greater than in other continents. It must be emphasized that this inertia is not primarily due to lack of resources, although this may also be the case. It stems most often from instinctive criticism ("if it comes from the Government, it is to be distrusted"). Furthermore, public opinion, or the part of it that has access to the media, has a not inconsiderable weight that, as in Europe, is exerted more <u>against</u> than <u>for</u> any particular initiative.

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(1) Or perhaps the unquestioned acceptance of authority is such a deeply-ingrained social value that resistance or disagreement is simply unthinkable.

(2) That is why the teachers' unions are less effective in the few L.A. countries where the industrial sector is already developed and has a strong union organization.

In short, the educational systems of Latin America are on the whole, sociologically speaking, almost as solid and as independent from power politics as in Europe - except, alas, in the matter of the appointment of administrative officials. The urgency of building the nation, so strongly felt elsewhere, is not noticeable in Latin America. The nation (as well as the educational system) is and has been there for longer than any living person can recall. It is therefore all the more difficult for Governments to secure for educational reforms the kind of motivation that can overrule resistance.

A last and very important point has to be made here, as a final feature that will help to individualize the Latin American type of educational systems as different from those of the more and of the less developed parts of the world. We have recalled that by and large these systems were (and still basically remain) set up on Western European lines, according to philosophical and sociological values inherited from Europe. We have also remarked in passing that they have been very attentive to North American educational philosophies, from Dewey and Kilpatrick (and perhaps from Horace Mann in the last century) to this day. These philosophies have for fifty years been the basis of instruction at teacher-training institutions. But <u>those</u> structures and <u>this</u> philosophy are radically at odds with each other. In a broad generalization, it may be said that the European systems, and particularly the French one, were devised in fact - if not in expressed policies and objectives - in order to transmit solid knowledge, out of a preoccupation with learning as such. Its curricular structures were and are centred on cognitive skills. Practically everything pertaining to school revolved around uniform and exacting examinations - all of which demanded a strong, centralized administrative organization. On the other hand, the American philosophy insists on the free development of personality, emphasizes local and individual differences and tries to ensure the acquisition of social and practical skills (1). All of this goes hand in hand with a large measure of decentralization, which to European and Latin American eyes looks almost like

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(1) I refer here only to primary and secondary levels. In higher education, the U.S. system is usually quite strict about the acquisition of knowledge.

anarchy (1). I leave to others the theoretical discussion on this issue, here grossly over-simplified. But the fact remains that, when the Latin American systems of education were intellectually conquered by the North American educational philosophy and adhered - at least in principle - to its methodological tenets (in the 1920's and 30's), their main structures, curricular organizations and administrations were already solidified along the European lines. Hence a fundamental uneasiness that affects responsible administrators, as well as planners, students of the educational scene, instructors at teacher-training institutions, and the more conscientious among the teachers themselves. For one thing, this discrepancy goes deep into the issue of "quality" of education, which has usually had priority over problems of extension in the minds - if not in the daily practice - of Latin American educators. Is quality to be gauged by the amount and accuracy of knowledge, or by not-strictly-cognitive standards such as social behaviour, willingness and ability to learn by oneself, satisfaction at school, or readiness to function properly out of the school? This is not the place for an in-depth discussion on matters which have behind them a plentiful bibliography. But this is an issue that can lead to administrative deadlock: when for instance the supervisory organization as a whole tends to emphasize the first view, whereas the technico-pedagogical departments (and their recycling activities) are apt to be of the latter opinion, the resulting internal opposition certainly does nothing to favour smooth developments.

The root of this uneasiness, i.e. the specific aspects of centralization and authoritarianism in Latin American educational administration, deserve more detailed attention.

4. A specific common feature: the issue of centralization

The issue of centralization vs. decentralization, although not generally perceived in the context of the deeper problem of structure vs. philosophy, has long been the subject of never-ending discussions in practically all Latin American countries. In this, they are not much

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(1) Perhaps this could be the reason why world-famous European innovators like Decroly, Montessori, Cousinet or Freinet (more or less the European counterparts of the American school, at about the same time) were not able really to change the official systems of education. They were widely admired (especially in teacher-training institutions and research centres) but the system "ne suivit pas".

different from other parts of the world. Usually, however, this issue is discussed rather in the abstract, as a consequence of reading foreign theoretical treatises. The discussions proceed in a sort of an historical void which can hardly throw light on the origins of the present situation and therefore contributes little to the solutions.

It seems to me that an understanding of this question requires remembering the particular situation of the founders of the educational systems in the second half of the last century:

(i) Sharing fully in the philosophy of the "siècle des lumières", the governments of the epoch wanted quickly to expand elementary education to populations that on the whole were not interested (except for the small upper classes - which already had their schools, usually private). The reasons of course were both political (to improve the consciousness of incipient democracies) and economic (to ensure "progress" through full literacy). But as many people were distrustful of schooling for their children, the education laws of that period made school attendance explicitly compulsory, and usually empowered the education authorities to make use of the police to bring children to school when persuasion failed. In fact the "people", i.e. the lower classes, comprising the vast majority of the population, were treated as children, who among other things did not enjoy full voting rights. Democracy was too fragile a thing to be entrusted to illiterate people (1). This paternalistic attitude of educating people more or less against their will naturally required a strongly centralized administrative system. Thus, educational administration was born, at least so far as procedures were concerned, as an authoritarian structure, not as a "service".

(ii) To attain such an ambitious aim as "universal education" in a short time, a large number of teachers were needed - and they did not exist. Teacher training ("Normal") schools were quickly established, often by bringing in North American or European educators, but the production of teachers lagged far behind the expansion of the system for quite a long time. In the meantime, therefore, unskilled people of good will but little knowledge were appointed as teachers, thus creating the necessity to

(1) It was Sarmiento, the father of the Argentine educational system, who wrote: "An ignorant people will always elect Rosas" (the recently-deposed dictator, 1833-1852).

watch them very closely and authoritatively: a second reason for a strong, centralized administration. The School Inspectorate ("Inspección General de Escuelas", or similar names) was in fact, and sometimes in law, the real Ministry of Education. This last, by the way, was not to appear until the second half of the XXth century. Instead there were Departments of Public Instruction, usually as a part of a larger Ministry which also comprised other quite different Departments according to the countries (religious matters ("Culto", it means "religious affairs", foreign relations, interior).

(iii) Moreover - and this was perhaps the main issue in the eyes of contemporaries - national educational systems as such were created, almost everywhere, as part of a larger fight to deprive the Church of its influence in public affairs. The education laws of that period, often sanctioned amidst bitter political struggles, usually defined the system by means of three adjectives: universal, free ("gratuita") and "laïque", i.e. excluding any religious teaching. This last feature, around which all discussions revolved, met the wishes of the modernizing sectors of the ruling class and - in some countries at least - of a good proportion of the urban middle classes, but it ran against the ingrained beliefs of the rural population and other sectors. Thus the necessity for a centralized, authoritarian administration was reinforced: the management of schools could not be confided to local groups of people who as often as not would emphatically maintain a religious bias that the ruling class viewed as a drag on modernization.

(iv) Thus the centralized and authoritarian structure of school administration in Latin America was not part of the Imperial heritage of Spain and Portugal. In colonial times there existed no educational administration at all. Rather it was a deliberate political decision, taken in order to promote national unity and to foster a quick process of modernization. Everybody was to receive the same basic education, which would encourage loyalty to the nation state above everything, including religion (1). Such uniformity could only be reached by way of a mono-

(1) And only to the nation state: what we call now "social studies" revolved around the map of the nation, and ignored to an incredible degree the history and the culture of sister nations. On the other hand, it did include a lot of material concerning Western Europe, as the source and model of culture. Even now a school child of Argentina is likely to know France a lot better than, say, Mexico.

lithical sort of administration. It is true that legal provisions were made for District Councils of Education, made up of laymen (who were appointed from the educated, politically reliable members of the community), but they had nothing to do with education as such, only with material needs of the school and "moral" vigilance of the teachers.

As can be seen, this situation was very similar to the set of problems now facing the new countries of Asia and Africa, but it happened a century earlier. The Latin American situation in regard to these problems has by now become quite different.

(1) After one or two generations, generalized resistance to school education disappeared. On the contrary, demand for education often exceeded the possibilities of governments to meet them. It is well known that the most predictable result of education is to generate demand for more education, as Ph.Coombs among others had rightly pointed out. Given the means to do so, the humblest communities would now create or expand their own schools, and probably be more watchful of the teachers and more demanding of the school than the national authorities (1). So the first reason for centralization no longer exists.

(2) The teacher situation varies widely from country to country, but it has generally improved to a very large extent. Several countries (the southernmost long ago, some others in the Caribbean region more recently) no longer have any problem of untrained teachers. In the remaining countries, which have a minority of untrained teachers (at least at primary level), the problems could be eliminated. Thus the need for a centralized system of administration based on policing by inspectors has disappeared in whole countries and in large sections of the remainder. On the contrary, it often happens that the training given to young teachers, based on quite modern theories and practices, is wasted when they start their professional careers, since a rigidly centralized system of inspection tends to discourage initiative and creativity.

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(1) This has been proved in a few cases. For instance, in the 50's and 60's, Argentina generalized secondary education by providing financial support (in the form of teachers' salaries) to local groups which, meeting all other expenses, founded high schools according to specified minimum standards, and were then allowed to manage them autonomously.

(3) As regards the struggles about religion in schools, usually a "modus vivendi" has been reached, which smooths over the old antagonisms. Church-ruled schools are allowed (subject to the same basic regulations as public schools, as regards curriculum, teacher qualifications, etc.), and sometimes receive State subsidies. Besides, quite a number of countries have reinstated religion as part of the official curriculum (1). Suppression of the religious bias in education is no longer thought of as necessary for modernization - although Church schools are often seen as strongholds of the privileged classes, and financial restrictions are sometimes imposed on them. In any case, the religious question is no threat to national unity, so this issue is no longer relevant to the problem of administrative centralization.

(4) In short, authoritarian centralization has ceased to be an administrative necessity to promote a national unity that practically everybody adheres to, and which is no longer menaced through poor teaching or religious dissent. With the Cuban exception, direct indoctrination in schools has become useless as a means to reinforce national solidarity. Besides keeping a definite nationalistic bias in the curriculum, such unity is more a matter of real equality of opportunity than a task to be pursued through administratively-enforced uniformity. On the contrary, modern sociological and anthropological findings have led to the conclusion that a judicious fostering of regional and cultural differences can enrich national life and strengthen national consciousness; in fact, encouragement of geographically-limited cultures has become the fashion.

If this is so - if old justifications are no longer valid, why is it that authoritarian centralization is still the rule in practically all Latin American educational systems?

The most obvious answer is, of course, administrative inertia (see above, pp. 15 and 20). Original creators, charismatic innovators, are scarce everywhere. The few who founded the educational systems about a century ago had of course to rely on institutional structures to extend and prolong their action. Their followers, more often than not, unwittingly watered down the original message and gave proportionately more weight to the legal and regulatory arrangements. The pristine "missionary" spirit, free and flexible in its responses to social needs, was gradually

(1) The exception in both cases is of course Cuba.

replaced by bureaucratic solidity and rigidity. Eventually education became merely a part of the State structure and was assimilated in the standard administrative organization, thus acquiring the same self-perpetuating features. Layer after layer of laws and regulations have resulted in a maze of legalistic bondage, very difficult to cut across to make place for new arrangements, the more so since each new legal disposition tends to create a special interest group.

Worst of all perhaps, education became subject to the same general, fastidious procedures of financial control which tie the hands of administrators, not only in adopting innovations directed at devolving some measure of autonomy to the lower levels, but even to making timely decisions concerning every-day events: i.e. maintaining a crumbling building, appointing a substitute teacher, conveying textbooks to schools in time - or simply replacing a broken windowpane, for which in some countries the authorization has to come from the central budget office. This niggling control of every little item of expenditure, which paralyzes lower-level administrators and a fortiori prevents potentially interesting small innovations, is rooted also in deep distrust of the financial authorities towards the educational system generally, which they see as a bottomless pit that swallows up any amount of money in exchange for little visible result.

Distrust in a different sense is another reason for central education authorities not relinquishing their detailed control of lower levels. Too often they seem unable to have confidence in the training the teachers have received under their (the administrators') regulations. Lip-service is readily given to the professional status of educators, but when it comes to the test, the professional autonomy that should be attached to diplomas is in fact denied. It is true that not all teachers are properly qualified, so that this lack of confidence in their capabilities to manage themselves is in some cases justified. But it is precisely the rigid uniformity of the system which prevents the higher authorities from making the proper distinctions, so that in order that the less-well-prepared teachers should not commit serious blunders, the growing number of properly-trained ones are submitted to the same curtailment of their professional autonomy. This attitude is, if not justifiable, at least more understandable when one reflects on the fact that, by and large, the most common contacts higher authorities usually have with the rank-and-file teachers are through

their ever-demanding Unions. These unions, caught in the trap of their own "working-class" rhetoric, all too often forego any constructive action for educational improvements and confine themselves to demands concerning salaries and work conditions. This puts them in the position of mere employees facing their employers, and leaves them little or no room for equal-to-equal talks of substantive matters of professional interest. Such a situation is clearly not conducive to the "employers" giving their "employees" any kind of decentralized freedom of action.

This lack of confidence is more noticeable, and perhaps more justified, as regards the intermediate levels of headmasters or principals and of district inspectors or supervisors - especially the latter - to which most of the decentralized authority would probably go. In fact, in systems that have recently expanded at a quick pace, this intermediate level of administrators is often less well trained than either the teachers or the personnel at the centre. As their promotion owed a lot to mere seniority - if not to political allegiance - they often belong to a definitely less-trained generation of teachers, less able to carry out increased responsibilities as well as to command professional respect from their subordinates. Their on-the-job training is usually, for not very clear reasons, more sketchy than that offered to other levels of personnel, as many studies have shown. Decentralization is certainly made no easier on this account.

On the other hand, it must be recognized that most teachers and headmasters or principals are not too keen on a decentralization that would give them more responsibility and make them accountable, not only to the higher levels but also to the communities served by the schools. Decentralization would of course have little meaning if it were not linked to more community involvement in the management of schools, so as to increase the latter's responsiveness to definite social needs. This is what teachers are wary about: openly, because "those people know nothing about education" - which in many cases is no longer true, but more deeply, perhaps unconsciously, because they (the teachers) feel that they would become directly answerable to the community. And the community is <u>always</u> present, not like the inspectors who come from time to time, or departmental heads who normally rely for their contacts on the written word. To the extent that the teachers - eased along by their unions - have substituted function for mission and become bureaucratized, they feel quite comfortable in the

role of public officers, answerable only to a remote hierarchy. Such a role is certainly less demanding than that of educators, daily carrying out their responsibilities towards pupils and parents. Thus, except for comparatively small groups of teachers with a strong vocation for service, decentralization is not a very attractive issue to them.

Moreover, not many sectors of public opinion are very much in favour of dentralization either. Most poor communities, and quite a number of not-so-poor ones, have become used to the idea that the State - that far-away, almost mythical figure - is the only source that can provide for all their needs, and have no use for a decentralization that would make them co-responsible for educational services. It is one question to demand an education more adapted to one's needs, and quite another to assume responsibility for it. On the other hand, in the upper levels of society, there are quite vocal groups that are still fighting last century's wars (mainly about religion or ideology). In the naive belief that Government decisions can change education overnight, they do not want the central power to be diluted along lesser levels of authority, for they hope that one day they will wield that power in order to further their own views on education and society. Such is the case of most political parties (who are also interested in having many posts at their disposal) and of several pressure groups: the more ideologically consistent they are, the more they want to keep a strong centralized power for future use. Or perhaps - and this is a common occurrence - they may claim freedom and devolution of power to "the people" when they are in the political wilderness, but as soon as they reach office they find all sorts of reasons for keeping power firmly centralized.

Lastly, there is a deeper cause underlying all the previous ones: the sheer incapacity of even conceiving a workable administrative scheme along different, really decentralized lines. Most ideas advanced on this subject are partial, isolated, sublimely unaware of the complexities of the system - this word being taken in the strongest sense. There is unfortunately in Latin America very little circulation of ideas, very little public discussion of proposals, about educational matters in general, and educational administration for development in particular. For one thing, educational research is very limited. What little there is usually centres on strictly pedagogical problems (reading-teaching methods, attitudes of teacher-trainees, evaluation procedures, and so on). Lately, it

has become increasingly concerned with the social aspects of education, but it rarely focuses on administrative methods. Further, regular educational reviews are very scarce and reach only a very limited number of readers. As for the daily press, educational matters are of course often discussed in its pages, but the standards of such discussions are in most cases pretty poor, based as they are on intuition, ideology or particular interests rather than on study and research. Serious, well-founded imaginative views do also appear from time to time, but they lack the continuity and organity that could lend them sufficient weight to influence real change.

Thus, finally, the issue of decentralization is really alive only to a numerically very limited group of educators, planners and administrators, who have meditated on the shortcomings of the school system and are more or less familiar with international literature on the subject. These few people see clearly that meaningful educational change, which everybody proclaims as necessary, can only be effective, in today's Latin American society, if it is accepted at, or even initiated by, the grass-roots level of the system. This will remain unfeasible as long as a centralized, authoritarian, uniformitarian administration continues to nip in the bud any manifestation of creativity, which will always be considered "deviation" from undiscriminating general rules (1). This enlightened minority is, I believe, not necessarily doomed to failure: after all, every important change in human history has been brought about by some active minority. But new strategies will have to be devised, taking into account all the factors in the case, if practical results are to be attained.

An important note must be added here, because in quite a few countries there is a situation that could be mistaken for decentralization. It is the proliferation of different educational authorities - national, provincial, municipal, private - acting with little or no reference to each other. This, however, is not the decentralization of a single national system of education, but the inorganic superposition of several systems,

(1) Obviously I am referring here to 'qualitative' development, whatever the difficulty of defining this term. Quantitative expansion can very well be planned and executed from the centre in small countries, like those of Central America - and it will probably be less costly and more efficient this way. In other countries, expansion will probably work better when done at regional level (province, department, or specially-designated area). But deep qualitative change cannot really be imposed by decree. It has to be induced mostly by persuasion - and this needs a personal touch that is only possible in small areas.

each one having its own schools, its own rules, its own scale of salaries, and so on - in a word, their own separate administration. Nevertheless, to the extent to which each of these independent systems is fairly developed, they are also centralized in the way we have described, with the exception of the private schools, which may have some sort of coordinating body but are administratively autonomous (1). Furthermore, in spite of their administrative autonomy, all these systems are legally subjected to centralized, uniform rules on substantive matters like structure of the school levels, curriculum, and often the diplomas required for teaching. Therefore, such a situation, while making national planning much more difficult (from data collecting to universally valid decision-making), does not represent a participative system - only a chaotic criss-crossing of authorities over the same territorial areas, generating wasteful competition and frequent conflicts.

(1) Except that the several schools belonging to the same religious order are administered as a group, whatever their geographical distribution.

II. THE PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESS

Educational planning as such (as derived but distinct from economic planning) was formally introduced in Latin America, as a general idea, at the Lima Conference of Ministers of 1956. After some initial work - particularly in Colombia - the UNESCO-O.A.S.-sponsored Interamerican Seminar held in Washington in 1958 gave it a systematic body of principles. According to the concepts and directions set forth in the main documents of this Seminar - widely disseminated in the whole continent - between 1959 and 1965, all Latin American countries officially adopted planning as a tool for educational development, and established some sort of planning machinery in each Ministry of Education. At the time, some countries had not established formal economic planning, or sometimes they had not integrated educational planning into the context of overall development. But at the Interamerican Seminar held at Santiago de Chile in 1962, the links between educational and socio-economic development were clearly spelled out, so that henceforward most financial authorities took an active interest in the development of education, and efforts were made to include educational planning in the general developmental machinery.

Thus the theoretical bases for action in this direction were more or less completed, in terms that were generally shared by the Ministries of Education of all these countries for quite a number of years. To that extent, this represented a considerable success for UNESCO, which was the main consistent driving force behind this movement, deploying on its behalf a vast effort both in training the "planners" and in assisting Governments in various ways.

It is easy now to see that those early approaches to educational planning and development were too simplistic. Of course a good number of theoretical and practical complications concerning educational development based on planning had already been pointed out in the Washington Seminar, and were developed through UNESCO's efforts - including the creation of I.I.E.P. - in the light of experience. However, in that first decade at least, educational planning was viewed throughout the continent in a rather naive way (1). It seemed to be a question of simply assembling a "planning

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(1) See C.E. Beeby, "Foreword", in G.C. Ruscoe's "The conditions for success in educational planning", IIEP-UNESCO, 1969.

unit" of a few specially-trained people and some professionals (educators and others), of assigning them a minimum budget and - with a UNESCO expert to guide them - of putting them to work. Higher authorities were then to receive technically sound advice and proposals, on which decisions could safely be taken - and the educational system would automatically improve. Educational planning for development was thus essentially an act of faith (1), blissfully unaware for the most part of its environment and conditions. In particular, not enough attention was paid to the depth and continuity of political will, without which no planning process could ever hope to overcome resistances of every kind, nor to the administrative overhaul that was necessary if decisions which implied a radical change in customary ways were to be accepted and complied with at grass-roots level.

However understandable these over-simplifications may have been, hard realities soon changed all that, as both political events and administrative shortcomings sent plan after plan to the shelves as little more than historical references. Quite a number of individual and collective studies were of course written in international circles, prompted by this situation - foremost among them, those of I.I.E.P. and UNESCO. But, as was said before, international interest at that period switched from Latin America to Asia and Africa (2), so that most of the conclusions of such studies - if they ever reached Latin America's educational managers - did not fit the very different conditions of this continent, at least in their specific details. And extracting their substance so as to make it relevant to Latin America's needs is not a task that should be expected from regular administrators.

Furthermore, virtually every such study or seminar dealt by necessity with <u>one</u> issue in the very wide field of administrative problems, or with just a few of them: some tackled the political setting, others studied the problems of centralization and participation, or proposed advanced administrative techniques; still others emphasized the training problems, defined the respective roles of planners and administrators, or spelled out the problems of "qualitative" planning; a large amount concen-

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(1) Which indeed it is in a way; but so is all education - and this fact does not preclude careful techniques. See Raymond Adams (ed.), "Educational planning: towards a qualitative perspective"; IIEP, 1978, p. 98.

(2) One excellent exception is G.C. Ruscoe's booklet cited in Note (1) p. 32.

trated on the financial and budgetary issues and so on and so forth. Taken as a whole, this impressive bibliography (1) constitutes a sum of theoretical and practical knowledge that leaves no essential field unexplored in the vast world of educational development, and would serve as a complete guide for managers and practitioners of the art - if they could avail themselves of it. But this of course is not the case, and never will be: it cannot reasonably be expected (even if such bibliography were available in the languages of Latin America) that the large number of people involved in the management and administration of educational development will ever have at their disposal the time - and be of the academic turn of mind - necessary to absorb all these teachings. In short, we do not possess at this time a systematic, condensed, not-too-complex summary of the administrative conditions that are now generally recognized as necessary for an educational development process to have a real chance of success - i.e., of being effectively carried out at class-room and school levels.

However, some such statement of critical conditions remains necessary, even in a modest attempt like the present one, in order to have some objective criteria against which to assess the workings of educational administration in Latin America as regards educational development. For this reason, I am forced here - disclaiming any theoretical thoroughness and avoiding polemical issues - to attempt an organized statement of such conditions as may be inferred from the wealth of specific publications alluded to and from personal experience.

1. The political will (2)

Administration in the conventional sense ("maintenance" administration) has been able in many cases to go about its business efficiently enough even in the midst of political change. On the other hand, "development" administration, i.e. the managing of plans and projects

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(1) The current (1978) IIEP catalogue of publications lists 69 items under the heading "Administration and management" - all but 7 of them since 1969.

(2) The essential but often neglected issue of the relationship between politics and development has been very well analyzed by M.A. El-Ghannam in "Politics in Educational Planning", IIEP Occasional Paper No.19,1970. C.D. Rowley dedicated an interesting paper to it, "The politics of educational planning in developing countries", IIEP "Fundamental" series, No. 15, 1971; but his analysis applies too exclusively to non-Western countries.

intended to achieve substantial changes, is essentially dependent on a firm, consistent political commitment. In this sense, a strong political determination cannot be considered merely a "pre-condition" to successful planning: it is more in the nature of a permanent basis for all further activities. It is not "previous" to the development process that planning seeks to set in motion: rather it is part of the planning process, its first step, as well as being one of its permanent dimensions, without which the whole construction will fall apart.

On the other hand, no political commitment towards planned change can have real consistency, no matter what rhetoric is deployed, unless it springs from insight into the relevance of education to the country's development and this in turn implies definite views about future society. In fact educational changes have been most effective when Governments have held a clear-cut ideology: in Latin America, unfortunately, such clear-cut ideologies are most often associated with authoritarian (but not necessarily unpopular) regimes, as in Cuba, Peru and Panama. This does not per se exclude planned educational development in democracies. It is true that in this case a clear course of action on the part of the Government requires for its effectiveness a large measure of consensus arising from the free play of many different interests. Such consensus has sometimes been attained, in countries where the social philosophies of the main political parties are indeed not too distant from each other, and a strategy incorporating participation mechanisms has succeeded in isolating educational matters from electoral politicking to a sufficient extent, as in Venezuela, Costa Rica -- or Chile in the past. Regrettably, however, on this continent formal democracies have often been too imperfect, and military regimes intellectually too weak, to secure that sort of consenses, so that at every change of Government, or simply of Minister, existing educational projects grind to a halt. But it is also true that, short of a ruthless totalitarian regime, too long a continuity in power of a single political group eventually brings a weakening of the political will, through erosion of its ideals: sheer survival takes precedence over meaningful change.

Thus, this essential condition is not easy to obtain. All the same, once a well-devised planning system has been built into the administrative machinery as a result of the initial decisions, political commitment is more likely to endure long enough: whether because the core of the planning team remains in place, protected by Civil Service regulations, in spite of

governmental changes - as is usually the case in democracies - and the new authorities are apt to listen to them;or simply because planners and administrators are able to use the feed-back from implementation constantly to enlarge the views of political authorities, and to give rise to new enterprises in basically the same direction.

A cautionary note should be added as to who are the subjects (in the grammatical sense) of this political will and commitment. The answer is not always easy in democratic governments where power is not incarnated in a single leader, and the highest executive authority often has to negotiate the appointment of his Ministers with different groups inside or outside his party. In such cases, educational development may be "willed" in different degrees, for different reasons and with different priorities by the President, the Minister of Education, the Parliament or the party machine, while perhaps the Minister of Finance only pays it lip service. Military governments often find themselves in a similar situation; their educational policy is much more uncertain than policies on finance, labour or industry, so that particular interest groups may variously and erratically influence this sector of policy. This results in political wavorings or absence of firmness and consistency.

The preceding remarks may seem too obvious. However, neglect of these realities has all too often led planners and administrators to repeated frustrations. This essential condition of successful planning is not often to be found. But this need not lead to discouragement - only to a realistic appraisal of the situation and to correspondingly modest aims. Helen McGrath (1) warns us that in the social world, striving for scientific rationality can be misleading; it is human rationality that must be sought. Similarly, we can say that unwavering, unfailing commitment on the part of politicians is more than human nature can normally produce. It is up to committed planners and administrators to make the best use of whatever political goodwill can be mustered - without engaging in power politics, which would disqualify them in the eyes of the next Minister or Government. If this limitation allows only partial plans, modest projects, lacklustre goals, it is still worth the effort. Big improvements are often the result of a chain of small attainments - if they are a chain, but to

(1) In "How can educational planning be rational?"; IIEP Occasional Paper No. 45, Paris, 1976

make sure of this is the planner's responsibility. Besides, a small-scale success can be used to awaken a more resolute political will for the future. As Peter W. Rodman says in a different context (1):

> "The question to ask is not, at what stage of development will sophisticated overall planning work? For if we postpone planning until that stage arrives, it never will. Rather the question is, how can we tell what kind of plan is feasible in particular administrative conditions?"

The same is true of political conditions. Thus, the planner's technical expertise and political awareness must in such cases be put to work in order to find the most strategic point to which the available amount of political resolution can be attracted - and then fed by visible results. As Adam Curle remarks (2), the "second best" can be the best if nothing better is feasible. On the other hand, a sparingly-proferred support may be enough for certain types of developmental activities (3). In any case, it must be remembered that no successful plans or projects have ever worked through only administrative action, in the absence of any political support, or isolated from any political background. So much for the wishful thinking of some administrators who dream of a "hands-off-education" type of government. Education as a system is essentially political. In theory the politicians can either propel educational development, restrain it, or leave it alone, but the last is in fact tantamount to holding it in check.

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(1) Peter W. Rodman, "Development administration: obstacles, theories and implications for planning"; IIEP Occasional Paper No. 2, 1968, p. 39

(2) Adam Curle, "Planning for education in Pakistan: a personal case study"; Harvard University Press, 1966, p. XVI. (Cited by H. McGrath, op.cit., p.16).

(3) In the 1960's, Costa Rica's primary school system increased its proportion of "complete" schools (i.e. those offering all six grades) from scarcely 40 per cent to nearly 90 per cent, thanks to the perseverance of the highest administrative officer in charge of this sector, throughout three different Governments. This improvement was never proclaimed as a basic policy, since at the time more interest was attached to secondary school reform, but it enjoyed the goodwill of four successive Ministers.

A sincere commitment to planned developmental action can best be assessed mainly by two decisive criteria: the way the planning organization is set up and listened to, and - perhaps more important - the way the administrative structures are shaken up and rearranged for maximum efficiency. Let us now examine these points in the light of recent findings.

2. The planning system

Theories and practical advice, largely based on experience, concerning the most effective way of setting up a planning organization for the educational sector, have been amply developed in recent years (1), and are among the best-known aspects of educational planning. Therefore, only those principles that are most relevant to the present Latin American situation will be recalled here.

To begin with, applying the planning approach to the tasks of educational development is still sometimes equated with the mere fact of producing a document, or a set of documents, called "the Plan". The planning approach involves a long process, a protracted series of actions being carried out by many individuals and groups at many points of the educational system. In other words, it requires the joint efforts of the whole administrative machinery, whose main orientation ceases to concentrate on system maintenance to become centred on development, i.e. on change.

Therefore, a planning organization that does not undertake to awaken the capabilities of the members of the whole system to think out the educational problems that the plan intends to solve, and to make creative

(1) Many of these studies deal only with one aspect of the problem, but a certain number include a comprehensive view. To cite a few, selected among the IIEP publications:
- G.C. Ruscoe, op.cit. in Note 1, p.32. From our point of view it has the advantage of being based on Latin American experiences. This study is ten years old, and many things have changed, but the main lines are still valid.
- A.W.P. Gurugé, "A functional analysis of educational administration in relation to educational planning"; IIEP Occasional Paper No. 16, 1969. Though paying more attention to African and Asian experiences, it also includes Latin America. However, it is also ten years old.
- K.R. MacKinnon, "Realistic educational planning"; IIEP, "Fundamentals ...", No. 20, 1974. Based essentially on experience in Papua and New Guinea, the author's conclusions are nevertheless easily transferable elsewhere.

contributions to programming and implementation, is doomed to failure. It is true that outward compliance can sometimes be obtained, if the political setting allows for the exertion of ruthless pressures on teachers and minor officials - but then it would not tend to develop education, only some sort of training.

In democratic societies (and even those subjected to transient undemocratic regimes) educational development has no meaning unless it is oriented towards a new "model" of social organization, including a greater social awareness and a larger measure of participation. These are attainments to which even dictatorial governments feel obliged to pay lip service. Specific development activities, which always demand from everybody a greater effort than usual, do not attract people's sympathy and devotion per se - only if they are perceived as steps in the direction to a better way of life. That is why all planning is "qualitative", seeking change and not mere growth. This is directly related to the question of the planning machinery. As J.R. Gass says (1):

> "Whatever the process of quantitative planning, in the end it leads to decisions about major changes in the educational system. The discussion of such decisions, with all their social implications, should be a social and not a technocratic affair (...) If we are serious when we talk of planning the educational revolution, the planners have to recognize that they have to face the educational community and the community at large in the planning process. This would imply different planning structures and machinery than those for developing an educational plan as a purely technocratic process" (underlining mine).

We will come later to the specific issue of participation. At this point we must conclude that, if so many individuals and groups, inside and outside the school structure, must participate in the process, what is needed (and this is a test of the political resolve) is an authentic planning system, not just a planning unit implanted in the administrative structure.

Are then planning units to be considered superfluous? What should be the role of planning units and of the planners as a special group of

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(1) J.R. Gass, "Planning the educational revolution"; IIEP Lecture-discussion series, No. 43, 1974, p. 3.

professionals? There is a temptation to reduce them to the role of technicians in charge of providing certain types of elaborate data of a quantitative, statistical nature, which other administrators cannot cope with, e.g. on demography, enrolments, school mapping, budgeting and perhaps manpower requirements. This conception, which in fact still affects the role expected of planning units in some Latin American education ministries, conveniently overlooks at least two facts that politicians and administrators often find uncomfortable: (i) that, as we have seen, all planning of education is essentially qualitative, since it is aimed at change, not at mere growth; (ii) that both politicians and administrators have very little time to think ahead, except in a very short-term perspective - and when they do, they usually have in mind only a particular interest or a narrow issue. The irreplaceable role of an effective planning group should then be thinking about educational prospects in broader, longer-range terms, both in matters of substance and of strategy. This thinking differs from scholarly thought and research in that it has to concentrate on a very concrete, complex and immediate reality which has to be organized, and consequently must produce proposals for a definite set of goals, and a feasible, balanced programme to attain them.

Because of these essential tasks, a number of specific techniques are indispensable to the planning unit, in order to know and assess the educational reality (diagnostic, evaluation), to identify and formulate the appropriate goals consistent with overall national policies, to conceive alternative ways to reach them, and to establish programmes of action: major tasks that imply a type of multi-disciplinary work beyond the capabilities of ordinary administrators. This technical work represents the bulk of the planning unit activities (1), but not the core, which must remain the type of cohesive thinking in global terms which we have just indicated.

Having recalled this, however, we must go back to our original proposition: the work of the planning unit, while absolutely necessary, is just a part of the whole planning process - no less, but no more. The group of planning specialists is the core of that process only in the sense that, thanks to its special qualifications, it is in a unique position to feed the whole system with ideas and proposals, both as to the

(1) As very well summarized, e.g. by Raymond F. Lyons in "Administrative aspects of educational planning"; an IIEP Seminar, 1969. IIEP, Paris, 1970, p. 85-86.

changes to be sought and as to the ways and means of carrying them out. These functions of animation and technical support are to be seen as a service to the rest of the educational and administrative systems, not as a commanding role.

This is indeed one of the main criteria for assessing the effectiveness potential of a planning organization: the degree to which the special planning group (whatever its name or its formal position in the organigramme) is integrated into the management machinery, so that a smooth continuum of developmental activities flows through all the system, both upstream and downstream from the planning unit. Except for the strictly technical elaborations, which should then be condensed in the form of working papers for the use of non-technicians, actual planning should be done in departmental committees or in task groups cutting across the administrative divisions, departments and hierarchies. This may make for slower work (1) but leads to much greater effectiveness of implementation.

However, if the "planners" as such should assist but not command (not even informally, as the tendance has been in Latin America), the question remains of who, or what body, should assume authority and responsibility for the overall conduct of the process. Political responsibility is of course vested in the Minister himself (2), in most countries with the advice of a National Council of Education or some such Board, the members of which usually represent different legitimate interests external to educational administration. But technical preparation of their decisions (i.e. "planning" in the usual sense) also needs a central authority.

In this respect it has been vigorously advocated (3) that the Minister should be surrounded by a Central Commission, specially set up and

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(1) Though not necessarily. In Costa Rica (1971), with 16 such committees and a central body personally chaired by the Minister, three months were enough to produce a comprehensive, well-balanced Plan. The key to success lies in the awakening of wills through the leadership of the higher echelons. It is true, however, that securing a strong UNESCO team of advisers was in that case a manifestation of intelligent leadership.

(2) In Latin America, Central Planning Offices or Ministries are not wont to meddle with educational planning, except by deciding on the overall budget.

(3) By A.W.P. Gurugé, in "A functional analysis of educational administration in relation to educational planning"; IIEP Occasional Paper No.16, 1969, pp. 107-108.

comprising senior officers of his and other concerned Ministries and representatives of teachers' and parents' organizations, and where the head of the planning unit would act as general secretary, submitting the proposals prepared by his Unit to the Commission. This does not seem a good idea, at least in the Latin American context. Such a special body - whose legal standing would be very difficult to define - could at most serve as a mechanism for consultation and coordination with the external interests represented, but never as a planning body, which among other things would require technical competence (not "representation" of other bodies) and a strenuous rhythm of work (not just weekly or monthly meetings, which is the most that such a body could manage). The role of such a Commission would in fact only duplicate that of the National Education Council, thus creating new points of friction within and without the Ministry.

There is instead a good case for establishing around the Minister an internal advisory body, a sort of "General Staff" made up of the highest career officers in charge of the main sectors of the Ministry, i.e. those coming normally under the direct authority of the Minister himself or of the Vice-Minister, but enjoying security of tenure. This would mean perhaps eight or ten people at most, representing in fact the greatest possible concentration of administrative knowledge and management responsibility. The head of the planning unit would, as one of the group, preferably be in charge of its secretariat. Through weekly meetings, this group (advisory as such, but immediately executive through its members) presents an impressive set of advantages:

- The senior officers get to know each other well, professionally speaking, and are kept up to date on the developments of every part of the Ministry. The usual situation is one of amazing mutual ignorance.

- They are therefore able to maintain unity of action throughout the Ministry, even outside specific planning activities. For instance, schools and regions would not receive contradictory or overlapping circulars from different Departments or Directorates.

- They are also able to keep lesser officers in their respective directorates informed about overall and specific progress in the Ministry, and thus have them participate in the decisions which will affect them.

- Coming specifically to planning, this group is in the best position to discuss basic issues and alternative courses of action, free of political pressures but - because of their responsible positions - well aware of the

political background.

- They can then analyze and discuss planning drafts as they are brought to them by the head of the Planning Unit (or by one of themselves), assess weekly progress of the planning activities, and utilize the information and the provisional decisions of the group to prepare more detailed drafts of the programmes and projects assigned to their own sector.

- Furthermore, this style of work tends to spread down through the directorates and departments, immensely strengthening the communication system as well as the unity of action of the whole Ministry.

There is no gainsaying the tremendous advantage this simple organizational device brings to the Minister himself (and his Deputies or Vice-ministers, who should also be part of the group), since the advice he receives does not come from separate, unilateral opinions but is the result of open discussion in his presence. In fact, regular weekly meetings of this kind are a permanent, most effective training course on educational planning for those senior officers who would never have time for formal training. Besides, the planning unit and its director are seen by the other departments as one of themselves, with no special privileges except those that may naturally arise from their professional ability. But this leadership will be exerted only in some matters, according to the subject under discussion. Each of the participants has the opportunity of leading the group.

The one condition necessary for this "general staff" kind of collective leadership to be functional is that the Minister must be really committed to the success of planning, over and above personal and petty-political interests. For if his main worry is in fact how to keep personal, unquestioned power over the whole system, this type of organization will have no appeal to him. He would of course prefer dealing with each director or departmental chief directly, so as to be able to play off one against the other. But, given the straightforward purpose of getting the most efficient administration, there is no better way of setting about it than having the senior staff work together (1).

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(1) The author was privileged to work in such a context for several years in one Central American country; the preceding paragraphs are not mere theory.

This conception of the planning organization has an important consequence for the professional status and the institutional standing of the special group of "planners" (1). Teachers, headmasters, line and staff administrators, and planners, notwithstanding their different background and functions, are all professionals embarked together in the same enterprise, in which personal competence becomes more important than formal hierarchies. It is essential to the success of planning that this kind of egalitarian perspective is not lost sight of. No one in the formal hierarchy has a monopoly of ideas: as everyone has at least some training (more at the higher posts) and experience (fresher at the grass-roots level), new insights, intelligent proposals and imaginative practical solutions can arise at any point in the system - and must be listened to. By stimulating the proposal of ideas, and by judiciously incorporating them in the wider context, the planner will not only secure future attention to his proposals, but will effectively improve overall planning, and its chances of being implemented.

A few further points deserve consideration. One concerns the systemic relationship of planning with research, only alluded to above. Since educational planning would have no advantage if it did not attend to medium - and long-range social needs, and since, on the other hand, realistic proposals for improvement must be rooted in an equally realistic knowledge of what goes on at the school and classroom levels, research activities in both fields (the socio-economic and the pedagogical) are essential to success. Planning units, however, are not research institutions - nor would they be useful if they diverted their time and energy in this direction. Therefore the planning system must explicitly include specific links with research organizations, whether located in Universities or especially set up for the purpose. When this condition is neglected, even the most authentic political commitment to educational change will remain

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(1) A wider discussion of this nagging question may be found in two papers by Adam Curle: "Educational planning: the adviser's role" and "The professional identity of the educational planner"; IIEP, Fundamentals of Educational Planning, Nos. 8 and 20, 1968 - 1969; also in Meredydd Hughes, "Administrative and professional relationships in educational administration", IIEP Lecture-discussion series No. 64, 1977. Curle's studies, however, relate more to the problems of the expatriate expert, while here we are thinking primarily in terms of the national planners' group.

largely ineffective.

A very serious matter is the staffing of the planning unit, where there are several distinct problems relevant to the purpose of this work. Let us say first that when the role of the unit has not been properly defined as we have just discussed, it is likely that either under- or over-staffing will occur. The second situation is usually worse than the first when it comes to effectiveness: not only because Parkinson's Law is a very real thing, but also because united, single-minded action becomes more difficult. Besides, a too-numerous group in the planning unit almost inevitably fosters the illusion of self-sufficiency, and the unit tends to become one of the customary "fiefs" engaged in power play inside the Ministry - thus losing all practical possibility of acting as a stimulus throughout the administration.

But the most delicate problem in this respect is that of recruiting outside the educational system a certain number of people with specializations that traditionally are not included in educational administration: mainly sociologists or anthropologists, but also economists, psychologists, communication experts, and so on. There is at this point no great dearth of such specialists in Latin American countries, but enrolling them on the Ministry staff is quite another matter. Whereas in Africa and in certain Asian countries such professionals often have no job opportunities outside State organizations, in Latin America the situation tends to be the reverse: Civil service salaries are so much lower than those in private enterprises that it becomes difficult to entice such specialists (at least, the best of them) into serving the Ministry of Education. Moreover, special deals cannot often be offered as a compensation when this Ministry has to submit to general financial or Civil Service regulations which allow for no exceptions. This is a very revealing test of the political will towards effective planning, for in most cases it is only the President or the Cabinet as a whole who can overrule such restrictions. There remains of course the possibility of the secondment of such specialists from other Government departments, although it is then more difficult to ensure the full loyalty of such temporary officers. On the other hand, it has been known to happen that vacant posts of a technical nature in the planning unit are filled just with ordinary teachers or junior officers of other departments in the Ministry, as a sort of "exile" following poor performance or personal conflict. At this point the test of real will applies to the highest offices

in the Ministry itself. In any case, unless these staffing problems are reasonably solved, the planning service will be powerless to effectively discharge the complex tasks it is supposed to do.

Finally, let us make clear that when we talk here of "the" planning unit, it is only for the sake of simplicity. In fact, a planning system in a moderately extended educational system requires not only a central unit, but also corresponding cells in all main departments, as well as in the regional and perhaps the local offices. This will be dealt with in more detail later on.

3. The administration

Since effective planning of educational development has to work through the whole administrative machinery, we must now examine the conditions the administration as such must fulfil in order that the planned changes may be implemented, in other words, the features that will turn over an efficient "maintenance" or "caretaker" administration into "development" administration (1).

What are the substantial differences between the two? Let us first dispel a common delusion by stating emphatically that it is not a question of techniques, at least, not primarily. If it often seems to be so, it is because one has in mind examples of ineffective systems which are technically poor, but such systems are no more oriented to maintenance than to development - they are just bad administration. Good administrative techniques - from the setting up of functional structures, the assignment of well-defined duties, the establishment of flexible procedures, to the arrangements for the management of personnel, supplies, finance, communications, and so on - are necessary in any case, whether there is a drive to change or not. It was already noted in passing that administrative efficiency in Latin America was often poorer than it was in many colonial administrations, which were reasonably well organized to attain their aims. The use of good techniques, however, did not make colonial systems development-minded. Techniques, then, are not the answer.

Secondly, we might take up the question of attitudes. Development administration, it is said, implies an attitude of service to education

(1) Of course administration as a process cannot be easily separated from the political aspects and the planning decision-making: the three are dimensions of a single process, rather than separate stages of it. But here I refer to the identifiable structures of administration and their personnel.

itself, i.e. to the activities of students and teachers. Attitudes are indeed extremely important, as we shall see in a moment, but this particular service-oriented attitude is not the difference, since it should be present in any good administration, whether development-minded or not. Insistence on this point is also prompted by the knowledge that most administrations have in fact an attitude of dominance over their "subjects", as if education were carried out in ministerial offices and not in the classroom. But the determining feature will not be found here.

The most distinctive feature seems to lie rather in the different kinds of goals that are pursued. In one case, the system aims at the maintenance, or even the improvement, of the status quo; in the other, it seeks to change it - substantially or even radically. It is true that this difference in goals will modify attitudes, since orientation to service will have to be combined with an eagerness to change. In order to effect this change, some new techniques will have to be added as well. But it is a set of goals of a new order which is the root of the difference. The goals as such cannot be discussed here: they are the substance, not the conditions, of a new type of administration. Nor shall we deal with the techniques themselves: a large amount of literature is easily available on them. The interest at this point centres on the problem of attitudes and their practical implications, since they seem to have been the least analyzed factor of development administration.

There is a common denominator for most individual manifestations of change of attitude in educational administration which will simplify the analysis: it can be expressed as a question of letting in fresh air. Traditional administrations, even when good, often give the impression of a closed house. Development administration, on the other hand, implies being open to all.

To begin with, before the introduction of planning which arose from the impact of sociology and economic science, when educational administrators talked of "educational needs" they in fact were concerned only with the needs of the system. At best, these were measured by the difference between stated aims of laws and regulations (like universal primary education, formal diplomas for all teachers, and so on) and the real situation. Such attainments were by definition assumed to be what the country needed. At worst, it was simply a question of making ends meet. This inward-looking attitude still survives in many quarters, at least in Latin America where, as we have seen, no nation-building urgency is felt. But real educational development demands an awareness of social needs to be satisfied through education (e.g. intelligent citizenship, communal solidarity, productive efficiency) with a view to the future of the nation and the world (hence the need for creativity, understanding of technology, adaptability

to urban life-styles, self-learning abilities). This really means opening the mind to the radical criticism of school which has arisen in recent years. Such criticism may have gone too far and the schools may be far from "dead" as E. Reimer and others believe, but undoubtedly they seldom respond to the deeper needs of each society in regard to the educational attainments of its citizens. An awareness of this situation will lead administrators to a fresh assessment of aims and goals - the first step on the way to genuine development.

Indeed, it is not unusual for quite a number of members of the educational establishment to be already aware of the social responsibilities of the system. This happens mainly among young teachers and junior headmasters - those who have already benefited from a more modern training. Also it is to be found among the personnel of some comparatively recent departments of ministries (usually curriculum, evaluation, guidance, etc.), who tend to be younger and to have been trained or re-trained along modern lines. But the old mentality is still rampant in certain sectors of the ministries (the older ones, wielding hierarchical authority) and at the middle level of the system, i.e. the inspectorate, whose specific problems will be discussed later.

For the practice of administration, this open-minded approach to aims and goals has the effect of demystifying rules and regulations, which demand blind obedience irrespective of actual needs. Faced with new proposals which do not fit into the current rules, the old mentality tends to say: "it can't be done", while the development-conscious will reply: "then let's change the rules". Elementary as it may seem, this opposition is a very real problem because the older elements are usually those with more effective power, and, lacking the security of clearly-perceived goals, they tend to cling to the letter of the law as the only safe point of reference. A competent leadership is needed to persuade them to adhere to new goals.

An important aspect of opening of administration to the influence of society is acceptance of other professionals external to the teaching profession into the regular administration. A certain number of these exist already in any system: statisticians, architects, and frequently psychologists. But other human sciences (sociology, anthropology, communications and economy as distinct from mere accounting) are now indispensable, at least in the planning offices. We have already mentioned the formal difficulties of incorporating them into the administrative structure of education, but still more delicate is the problem of their being unreservedly accepted as equally responsible for the management of education. On

the other hand, since orientation towards new goals must permeate the whole system, and these new professionals - essential for this task - cannot be present at every level, other complementary measures will have to be taken. For instance, these disciplines should be present in the training and retraining of teachers and administrators. At school level, moreover, professionals of different specialities in the community should be welcomed to contribute regularly to specific school activities and to discuss problems with teachers and principals. They may not be specialists in the social sciences, but at least they will bring in different points of view, thus forcing the practitioners of education to reassess their own roles, goals and procedures.

The necessity to open up educational administration to the outside world also applies to its relationships with other Government sectors, mainly those concerned with planning, finance, labour, industry and agriculture. Regular contacts with them should go much farther than the usual attempt at "coordination", which very often boils down merely to avoiding duplication of efforts. It should mean discussion of real issues (as a contribution to overall planning) and of common projects in the field, so that new ideas and different opinions are placed before educational administrators. In this connection, all too often the most neglected, as well as the potentially richest relationships are those with universities, and particularly the Schools or Faculties of Education. Dialogue and coordination with them is essential, not only because they usually are in charge of training the teachers, at least for the secondary level, but they are also the logical place for training planners and administrators and the natural seat of research. In countries where this link actually exists, the beneficial effects include, besides the opening of administrators' minds to new ideas, the reinforcing of motivation to continue studying.

But the most important result concerns the relationship of central administrators with "the field" - actual students, teachers and headmasters. Development-minded administrators, if they want to be realistic, cannot rely exclusively on formal, hierarchical communications: a measure of physical contact is necessary. This has little to do with the usual kind of trips to the field by highly-placed administrators, made only when some

crisis or conflict arises in a particular spot. These fire-fighting missions are not conducive to level-headed assessment of field conditions and possibilities. The work schedule of central administrators should include regular visits to representative institutions of each level, in each region of the country. Such visits should be planned, not as "inspections", but in a spirit of free, professional-to-professional communication and discussion of deeper problems, around the issue of what the school does and could do, given the real constraints, for the benefit of the particular community. The usual system of communications, written and sent through successive hierarchical filters, can at best be a channel for ideas as to how methods of attaining stated goals could be improved, whereas direct, physical communication is more apt to produce insights about what the goals themselves should be.

This does not of course mean the normal channels of communication by way of reports from middle-level administrators are useless. Such reports will convey more meaning to one who regularly sees reality at first hand, and perhaps, as a consequence of comparing personal experiences with written accounts, better ways will be devised for making such accounts more informative. In any case, the main idea is that in order to stimulate fresh thinking about educational development, it is indispensable to cut across hierarchical levels and short-circuit formal procedures.

A last point concerning the opening up of administration to outside views is the necessity of regularizing relationships with the teachers' unions - frequently very powerful in Latin America as previously explained. These relationships are uneasy at the best of times and come to the fore only when conflicts arise, which they do with sometimes boring periodicity. A context of planning presents a very good opportunity for improving relations between the unions and the authorities. Committees working on policy suggestions as well as technical proposals should incorporate teachers' unions representatives, both for strategic reasons (it is not so easy to oppose a plan on which one has worked) and for more intrinsic reasons, since the unions often possess a wealth of educational experience that should be put to use. In some cases, through this kind of participation, the unions have become noticeably more responsible and less demagogic. Thus the administration has opened a door instead of putting up a barricade.

(a) Decentralization

This brief survey of the attitudes required for development administration, together with some of their practical implications, leads logically to an important structural consequence: the need for decentralization of management. There is probably no other issue in administrative science that has been so thoroughly discussed and I do not intend to go over it all again (1). Rather I would like to contribute a few remarks from the perspective adopted here: administrative decentralization as the soil in which development attitudes can grow and bear fruit.

The origins of over-centralization in Latin America were discussed earlier in this paper(pp.22-31). Its harmful effects have been summarized among others by Peter W. Rodman (2) in a list that could well have been taken from the experience of this continent. Some of the points he makes refer to objective shortcomings: the "bottleneck" effect, the chronic delays, the proliferation of red tape, the wasteful over-working of senior officials. Others relate more directly to the attitudes of people in central administration offices: bureaucratic stagnation, evasion of responsibility, unresponsiveness to local needs. All this is common knowledge. But in the context of a planning process, two complementary observations could be added. Firstly, it is obvious that the speed of communications is essential, both for directions going from the top down and for feedback from the bottom. But as the distance increases between decision-making

(1) A good summary of the discussion will be found in Gurugé, op.cit., pp. 195 ff. Donald Stone has compiled a good list of administrative handicaps to planning (in "Government machinery necessary for development", Washington D.C., 1965; cited by M. El-Ghannam, op.cit., pp. 51-52): it is interesting to note that the only one of these traits universally applicable in Latin America is over-centralization.

(2) Op. cit., p. 14

centres and implementation levels, the more likely it is that their transmission will be tardy and unreliable. Over-centralization is the enemy of communication. On the other hand, if imaginative thought is given free rein as we suggested above, and ideas begin to pour from the middle and lower levels of the hierarchy, just one centre of information will quickly become unable to cope. Even with the most sophisticated equipment for the processing of information (which in Latin America is almost non-existent), the capacity of people who finally have to use that information for taking or suggesting decisions will reach saturation point. But, if middle-level administration were instead empowered to take certain decisions, the volume of information to be transmitted to the top would drastically decrease.

It might be useful here to recall the true nature of decentralization. It is not simply a question of delegating powers to offices and officials at the middle and lower levels, which should of right be exercized by them, although this "deconcentration" is a part of the picture. It should apply also to matters that, being directly reflected in costs, are of necessity the final responsibility of the Ministry (personnel, supplies, maintenance). But real de-centralization, i.e. the devolving of power to local officials at the level where actual education takes place, involves powers of decision concerning the substance of education, like curriculum, methodology, class organization, evaluation, and so on. On these matters, only the most general standards should be determined at the central level, i.e. for national unity, the minimum objectives to be attained should be set out, rather than detailed blueprints for attaining them. In this regard it is curious to observe that, while the pre-service training of teachers improves, making them theoretically more able to discharge their duties as full professionals, more and more pedagogical detail is imposed on them, as if they were incapable by themselves to decide what is best for each particular group of students. This nips in the bud all opportunities for change, the first condition of which is freedom of pedagogical practice. Indeed, the main reason behind the drive towards effective decentralization should be, not the need to solve administrative problems (a desirable effect by itself) but to liberate potentials for initiative and creativity that the present system restrains. This would be the surest way to let some "fresh air" into the administrative structure, as well as into the educational system which the administration is supposed to serve. We hear a lot nowadays about the best ways of "building change" into the

system. Effective decentralization of this kind, and the consequent liberation of energies, will do more than any "change institution" we could devise.

It is not at random that the expression "devolving the powers" has been used. When a thorough overhaul of the administrative side of education is envisaged in a democratic context, decentralization must not be seen as a painful "concession" or something that has to be tolerated for the sake of alleviating the burden of central offices. On the contrary, if we recognize that education proper takes place in a face-to-face, student-teacher relationship, it is the centralizing measures that are to be seen as a concession to larger social needs. Standardization has to be justified, not freedom. There are of course many good reasons to gather pedagogical schools into a system, despite all the complexities and limitations of freedom that this entails, since only a well-organized system can expand education beyond the vagaries of spontaneous initiatives, and provide it with important services outside the reach of individual communities; but resistance to decentralization in modern administrative structures is not based on these reasons. It is rather a legacy of the way these systems were first established, as pointed out earlier in this paper. At the present stage in history, however, the previous motives are no longer valid. An honest reappraisal of the administrative structure of education should start from the educational facts, at classroom level, analyzing what can and cannot be done autonomously by the professionals in charge, and then proceed upwards level by level, demanding real reasons for every restriction of freedom, i.e. social reasons that could demonstrably outweigh any loss. Only then will education, as a system, begin to free itself from the military-industrial model it has followed for over a century and pursue genuine development, eschewing exercise of power over people (in the military tradition) and worship of the gods of productivity (the industrial model).

To come back to more practical considerations, it must be emphasized that every centralizing or regulatory measure, however justified, must be coupled with efficient channels of feedback, so that effective action can be reinforced and wrongs redressed in time. Quick feedback can also greatly contribute to the easing of the all-too-comon inadequacies that plague the logistics aspects of day-to-day administration, and a fortiori, those of development programmes. However, it must be said that delegation of decision-making powers to middle-level officers nearer to the field

would eliminate a large number of problems.

(b) The strategy of administrative reform

For many years now, these and other administrative problems have been identified as prime obstacles to successful planning. "Without good administration", says M.A. El-Ghannam (1), "planning will not be correctly 'institutionalized' in developing countries". And he goes on to cite Arthur Lewis" recommendation that "the first three plans in a developing country should be mainly concerned with meeting the needs of the administrative machinery for improvement."

While the substantial importance of good administrative machinery cannot be over-stressed, it is difficult to agree with the strategy thereby suggested. Administrative improvement per se is not an attractive, motivating issue. When requested to make a big effort in this direction, most personnel in the old-style administrations will bluntly ask: "What for?" And no answer will satisfy them, for if it has to be logical, an appeal will have to be made to long-range views - precisely what the old type of administrator is not prepared to understand, much less sacrifice his routine for. Such long-term thinking can only be introduced through concentration on some substantial matter. As for the general public - in our case, students, teachers and parents - it will feel that once again its urgent interests are being brushed aside for reasons not understood by them.

The strategy we are discussing is right in the sense that complex, all-embracing plans cannot and should not be started until the machinery of administration has reached a minimum level of effectiveness. But it is wrong to suggest that substantial planning should be postponed for what in fact will be an indefinite period of time - administrative reform will not work in a void. Rather, the strategy would have to combine both elements. Substantial planning (not to be confused with global, ambitious plans) should be introduced gradually from the start. The building-up of administrative capabilities would be part of the plan, and motivated by the said plan's goals, on a suitably urgent matter. The corresponding administrative efforts to improve will in fact be the take-off point for larger and larger reforms. And then, as the competency of administration grows, the scope of planning can be widened and speeded up.

(1) Op.cit., p. 52.

4. Participation and global consensus

To talk about "participation" in the process of educational development through planning is to venture on to unsafe ground, insofar as practically no satisfactory experiences of this kind have been carried out in developing countries (1) - not a single one in Latin America - and very few even in developed countries (2). However, the logic of administrative principles for planning, especially in regard to decentralization, and above all the principles of democracy, oblige us to face this issue squarely - and to blame the lack of participation, or at least of widespread consensus, for many failures in the implementation of plans.

An attempt to clarify the concept of participation in the context of educational development, as might be derived from a number of recent studies (3) seems unavoidable at this point. It is no easy task, since participation is in itself an elusive concept. The boundaries become wider according to the weight attached to particular variables by the definer: who are the participants? in what kind of actions? why should they participate? to what degree? in what kind of socio-political background?...

The simplest, "dictionary" type of definition of participation, would perhaps characterize it as the contributive actions of individuals and groups, not vested with final authority in educational matters, in the process that leads to making authoritative decisions about education and to carrying them out. Two elements in this description seem to be determinant: the type of "contributive action" and the categories of "individuals and groups". The analysis of these two elements in the context of educational development processes will help to clarify the issue.

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(1) Commendable exceptions seem to be the cases of Senegal and Tanzania. Cf. David R. Evans, "Responsive educational planning: myth or reality?", IIEP Occasional Paper No. 47, 1977, pp. 43 ff; and "Educational development in Africa", 2 vols., various authors; IIEP, 1969.

(2) Cf. McCrae C. Grassie, "Participatory planning in education", IIEP Occasional Paper No. 36, 1974. His best examples come from Great Britain and Australia.

(3) Only among IIEP publications, see the cited works of D.R. Evans, McCrae Grassie, Helen M. McGrath and Mohammed El-Ghannam. Interesting references are to be found in studies about particular countries (in Latin America, mainly Peru).

As for the first element, David R. Evans (1) greatly contributes to clarification by distinguishing three forms of participation:

(i) Nominal participation: "the structural forms for participation exist, and groups may even meet under the general rubric of a representative process. Analysis of what happens in such meetings may indicate that no effective communication upward is in fact taking place. Often such representative bodies become platforms for speeches by leaders and visiting dignitaries and result solely in a passive, recipient type of participation".

(ii) Consultative participation: "Procedures whereby decision-makers seek advice and suggestions from various parties. Such interchanges are characterized by complete control of the process by the decision-maker (...) Such consultative participation ... happens only when decision-makers feel sufficiently secure in their positions (...) Consultation takes considerable time and resources which the decision-maker may feel would be better spent in other activities". Mr. Evans is rather pessimistic about this type of participation, but some experiences in Latin America, made with the genuine intention of listening to opinions and subsequently modifying the plans, have given relatively good results.

(iii) Responsible participation: "where the opportunity to discuss issues, to exert influence on behalf of one or another alternative, to vote, and finally to know by what process the final decision was reached, all overlap. Participants in such a process are therefore fully aware of the alternatives, and normally will feel some commitment to decisions reached by the process".

As to the second element, the "subjects" of participation, another tripartite classification will initially be useful in the context of this discussion: i.e. administrators, teachers, the community. Each of them of course comprises many sub-categories (in the third case, extremely different), but this will suffice for the present. In fact, these two sets of variables can be used in a sort of matrix which will help to identify the actual and the desirable degree of participation by each group:

(1) Op.cit., p. 29

Type of participantion	Administrators	Teachers	Community
Nominal			
Consultative			
Responsible			

It is easy to see that in the most usual case when participation is a recognized value, the degree of real participation would cut diagonally across this matrix: administrators, especially at central offices, often have a responsible sort of participation, teachers are merely consulted and community participation is generally nominal. The ideal of course would be that everybody should participate responsibly, but this depends on many other factors.

The first of these factors concerns the "philosophy" of participation, i.e. the reasons why a politico-administrative system seeks the contribution of other people in its decisions. Leaving aside purely demagogic intentions, which in any case will never reach the third level, there can be several bona fide motives. At the lowest level, it may be only a question of ensuring a minimum degree of acceptance of the plans on the part of the population in general, and of teachers in particular. Nominal participation will often suffice, in the form of an extensive campaign directed at explaining the why and the wherefore of the plan. Consultation of teachers, or of their representatives, also would be useful, but at a stage when the main decisions have already been made. The administrators, having more or less fully participated in the previous process, will be called upon to make sure that the teachers comply with the decisions.

A further degree of participation, mainly implying real consultation with at least representatives of the community, will be utilized when what is needed of the public is not only understanding and sympathy, but also some help (financial or other) for the implementation. Then, a major effort to obtain as much responsible participation as is possible, may be based on a genuine conviction that the right educational decisions cannot be reached (especially as regards the detailed sub-decisions at local level) unless all those interested have had their say. This is as far as any system will go as long as the authorities focus only on the improvement of

the educational system as such. Indeed, educational development in the narrow sense does not need more. It will be enough to have obtained information from all levels of the system in the first place. When the main lines of the plan have been technically established, responsible opinions can be secured again from all levels, according to which modifications will be made. At the same time local adjustment of the programmes can be requested by interested sectors. A fuller participation at all stages of plan preparation would probably delay the final decisions for too long and perhaps also weaken their consistency and impact.

But the whole issue takes on a different aspect if the main intention, above that of getting a good plan, is to use the process of educational improvement as part of a social development process. Participation is sought because of its educative effects on society. Such effects are considered more important within a comprehensive political project, than the actual educational plan that will come out of it. The imbalances or other deficiencies of the plan, when it tries to reflect the wide variety of aspirations of different sectors in the national community will be accepted: the important thing is that people should start to take a hand in shaping their own destiny.

At this point, however, it should be noted that "the community", as the most desirable subject of participation, is in fact an equivocal term, only negatively defined as "everybody who does not belong to the school structure". It includes many kinds of people, with widely different interests in education, and enjoying very different degrees of wealth and influence (1). Therefore, if the mechanisms of participation at the local level are left entirely in the hands of "the community", without corrective directions from above, they will be captured by the small group of influential and better-off. The more needy will not see their necessities reflected in decisions, and may even be left relatively worse off (2).

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(1) This definition by exclusion, characteristic of the "Tiers-état" in pre-Revolution France, lies also at the root of the "Tiers-Monde" theory, while the translation as "Third World" does not convey this nuance. The French term shows awareness of vast differences within the group of non-priviliged countries, as the "Tiers-état" included rich bourgeois, poor urban workers and miserable peasants. But "Third World" is merely an ordinal expression: differences would need to be indicated by terms like Fourth world, Fifth world, etc.

(2) Cf. David R. Evans, op.cit., p.30.

In short, given the large differences among categories of people within "the community", participation mechanisms - at least in under-developed societies - should be carefully regulated to give everyone his chance.

Even when widespread responsible participation is sought and organized, its extent will be affected by another more objective factor, the nature of the major goals. When the essential aim is the extension of education, elaborate participation mechanisms are not necessary at the lower levels. A general consensus is not difficult to obtain, and will be manifested rather spontaneously at national and provincial levels, at least when the criteria used for gradual extension do not unduly favour one area or one special group above others. However, when it is a question of introducing reforms (of school structures, streams, curricula, et al.) full participation becomes necessary. Probably also the manner and extent of participation will not be the same when substantive educational matters are at issue as when merely material support for the schools is needed.

A further problem concerns certain possible political uses made of participation by the Minister or the Government as a whole. When they are faced with systematic opposition from the teachers' unions, or when too much resistance is offered by teachers to reforms requiring more work on their part, the authorities may try to encourage the participation of parents, students and other community groups, in order to build up pressure from below and overcome such resistance. Similarly, large-scale participation of headmasters and regional administrators may be used by the political power as an effective way of overcoming the resistance of old style central administrators to, say, decentralization. But this manipulation of the participative processes, while politically legitimate, is extremely difficult to handle, and can lead to dangerous and unexpected consequences.

When all else has been said, the most decisive factor affecting the possibilities of real participation is the politico-administrative setting prevailing in the country. As a rule, no greater participation can be expected in the educational sector than in politics and administration generally - although, as we have said, this sector can be used as an initial step for more participation in the wider context of public life. Normally, however, the actual degree of decentralization in general administration, the location of real decision-making powers on each matter of public interest, and most of all the customs of the people when they are seek-

ing to solve their problems, are the main conditioning factors in regard to participation. This amounts to saying that, before deciding on participation mechanisms, a careful study should be made of the structures and the real effectiveness of regional and local administration, to see whether they can be used or not as vehicles for the kind of participation desirable for education, or if other machinery will have to be devised. In fact most Latin American countries have several kinds of legally-established mechanisms of this sort: educational councils or boards for primary school districts, made up of laymen of the community; similar bodies, in some countries, for every secondary school; Parents' associations; "Patronatos", or community groups which are voluntary but fostered from above, in charge of getting some extra money for material needs on a regular basis. But the role of all these bodies is either purely nominal and totally in the hands of the educational administrators, or strictly limited to supplementing financial resources. Furthermore, they are practically always in the hands of a small group of influential people, who find in them a means to enhance their status.

Thus, diagrams of the ideal organization of the participative process (1), inspired by the situation in some developed countries, may perhaps be useful as pointers in the right direction, but certainly not as blueprints to be followed in any country. Only honest, capable and perspicacious political leadership will be able slowly to work towards the inclusion of all kinds of people in the tasks of development, educational or otherwise. So we finish this chapter as we opened it - by stressing the overall importance of the political setting. It has been observed that with or without formal planning educational development has taken place when political commitment was behind it, and conversely, the best plans have been ineffective when the political will failed. This is not a reason to despair, but rather a call for realism on the part of planners and educational reformers in general.

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(1) As in McCrae C. Grassie, op.cit., p. 27.

A SUMMARY

As this chapter deals essentially with theoretical issues, and we have been led to discuss some points on which there is as yet no consensus, it will be useful to state here the conclusions which will be used as criteria in the factual analysis of the remaining chapters. Although some of them are strictly those of the author, most are widely shared. However, their selection, their particular wording and their logical organization are the author's.

- On the political context

(1) A strong, consistent political commitment, to back up the whole planning process, is a sine qua non for the successful implementation of reforms and other improvements in the educational system.

(2) Such commitment on the part of the political authorities must spring from, and will ensure the strengthening of, a definite conception of the "model" of society that institutional education is expected to help bring about.

(3) A good planning system, established as a consequence of an initial commitment, will in its turn help sustain the politicians' will in future stages of the process.

(4) Differences among the various seats of political power in their degree of commitment to implement planned development of education, although weakening political support for effective action, do not automatically rule out all possibilities for planning and development, provided that the planners' and administrators' own commitment does not fail. The latter can usually find minor but strategic issues for which enough political backing can be obtained, and for which properly planned action will be effective.

- On the planning system

(1) Planning should be seen by all concerned, not as a series of actions separate from everyday life, nor as the work of a single specific unit, nor as a mere document - but as a comprehensive process, from the original political decision to plan, to the implementation of plans at classroom level.

(2) Planning is essentially qualitative, even in its quantitative goals. Thus it cannot be the reserve of a special race of "planners":

rather it is the whole educational-administrative system that must work in a way that is consistent with the planning approach.

(3) The main role of the planning unit is not to decide, nor to exert authority, but to provide a technically-supported basis for thought about the prevailing situation and the prospects of the educational system.

(4) In order to fulfil these functions of animation and technical support, the planning unit needs a series of techniques of a multi-disciplinary kind that cannot be expected to be found elsewhere in the administration departments.

(5) The chances of a plan being implemented through the actions of the whole administration depend, among other things, on the degree of integration with the administrative machinery which the special planning group has attained. Therefore this group must not be placed at a higher level to set it apart, but on an equal footing with the "directorates" or main divisions of the Ministry.

(6) The best operational method to produce a good overall plan seems to be for the Minister to establish an advisory body composed of the most senior officers in each of the main subdivisions of the Ministry, including the head of the Planning Unit; and to work with them on a regular basis (weekly meetings?). Adherence to this demanding style of work will be the main test of his resolution, as well as the most effective way of orienting the whole Ministry towards shared goals.

(7) The planning technicians, as well as other highly-placed officers, must keep communication channels open to all parts of the system, in order to glean the best ideas and proposals that can in fact come from any level of the system.

(8) Effective working links must be established on a regular basis between the planning units and educational research institutions, whether already existing (Universities?) or specially created.

(9) Specialized planning staff must include non-educational specialists in contributory disciplines, who should be secured even if standing personnel rules have to be modified. But the total numbers of planning staff must be kept to the minimum necessary to discharge carefully-defined duties, to make certain not to pre empt the work of other departments which would then lose interest in the overall process.

(10) The central planning unit must have corresponding planning cells in all main departments and regional offices, whose functions will be similar to that of the central unit but confined to their specific sector.

- On the administrative conditions

(1) The conversion of a "caretaker" type administration into a "development-minded" one depends basically on the adoption of a new type of goal, i.e. change-seeking goals, related to some 'model' of future society.

(2) Such new goals will affect the attitudes of administrators: the orientation to service, essential to any good administration, will have to be supplemented by an eagerness to change. They will also affect the techniques employed, by adding new planning (forecasting and programming) techniques.

(3) The test of change-oriented attitudes is the disposition to let fresh ideas into the closed world of educational administration, first and foremost by introducing consideration of new social requirements for the future in the appraisal of educational "needs".

(4) Another test of new attitudes is acknowledgment that rules and regulations are not the ultimate source of wisdom, and yet another, the frank acceptance of specialists in the social sciences as equally capable of contributing to the management of education.

(5) Outward-looking attitudes should lead to regular working relationships with different Government departments, which can bring fresh viewpoints to discussions, and with Universities, whose training and research activities can also result in increasing the range of vision of educational administrators.

(6) Open minds should lead administrators to seek out regular, direct contacts with the field - actual schools, teachers and students otherwise much of what they learn may be only theory. Their visits must not be of the "inspection" type, for which other mechanisms exist, but should be for the purpose of a "professional" exchange of views on concrete problems, so that planning can become more realistic.

(7) Relationships with teachers' associations must be established on a regular basis - not only when there are conflicts - so as to

increase those unions' professional responsibility and to put their competence to good use.

(8) Over-centralization of the administrative system, the cause of many well-known ills, can no longer be justified by the initial reasons. Present, valid reasons for retaining a measure of centralization have not been properly analyzed so that the system is clearly dysfunctional. Decentralization should not consist only of delegation to the field of some functions properly belonging to the centre, but mainly of a devolution of powers that belong essentially to the practitioners of education and the local communities.

(9) The main purpose of decentralization should be to encourage initiative and creativity at all levels, thus enriching planning and introducing a measure of pedagogical freedom into the system. This will be more effective in the long run than any new institution explicitly set up to promote change.

(10) Educational planning for development cannot wait until the administration has been reformed. A good strategy will introduce manageable changes as an inducement for the improvement of administration, which in its turn will permit the quicker implementation of further educational reforms.

- <u>On participation and global consensus</u>

(1) Genuine participation, understood as the contribution of individuals and groups to the decision-making process and the implementation of educational plans and reforms, is not only a basic requisite of democracy, but also an essential condition if plans are to be effectively implemented.

(2) Increasing degrees of involvement include (a) nominal, (b) consultative and (c) responsible participation. A high degree of involvement is easier to obtain from administrators, less easy from school-level personnel, and very difficult from communities. But responsible involvement of communities should remain a major preoccupation of the authorities.

(3) Governments' intentions in seeking out participation may range from merely ensuring that strong resistance to a measure will not arise, to incorporating in the plan proposals and cooperative activities put forward by anybody interested in education. Apart from this, such

participation can be sought for its educative effects on society at large and in this case the aim of improvement of plans is subordinate to such educative effects.

(4) If genuine participation of communities is to be ensured, the Government must establish the proper channels so that the process at the lower levels is not monopolized by existing élites for their own profit.

(5) Participative processes become more essential as plans shift from mere extension of educational facilities to qualitative change and reform.

(6) Actual participation by the people is conditioned by the political and administrative arrangements prevailing in the country: it cannot be more than one step ahead of them. Thus, assessment of the actual functioning of public life in the country is a precondition for establishing effective participation mechanisms in the field of education.

III. THE USUAL SHORTCOMINGS: POLITICS AND PLANNING

With the preceding considerations as a broad frame of reference, we must now attempt to assess the role played by administration in the successes and failures of educational development in Latin America from the moment when planning of education became an officially-adopted doctrine some twenty years ago.

Since it would be vain, when considering the development process, to try and isolate the purely administrative factors from the political setting and the specific planning organization, the subdivisions of this chapter are meant only to introduce some order into the discussion. In any case, cross references within each section will be freely made. Furthermore, the problem of participation will not be treated as a specific issue, but will instead be considered as a dimension of all three aspects of the process.

A very important caveat must be mentioned here. As there are so far very few in-depth studies of the working of educational administration in individual countries in the context of educational plans (1), the

(1) In UNESCO's Catalogue of Publications, 1977-78, 157 items are listed under the heading of "Administration, financing, teaching staff" (49), "Educational planning" (63) and "Methods, research, innovation" (45); but only two of them deal directly with administrative problems of plan implementation (one in general, one about Sri Lanka). A few others present the administrative aspects within larger studies of countries (including two very good I.B.E. analyses of the Peruvian reform). The IIEP list of Publications and Documents, on the other hand, has 69 titles under "Administration and Management", but some of them deal in fact with planning (including statistical methods and problems of costs), and 45 of the papers are short presentations of less than 50 pages, usually included in the two series called "Occasional papers" and "Lecture-discussion". Two very good studies on the primary school inspection of Peru and Venezuela are the only ones directly concerned with Latin America. No other reform process in the continent, from the angle of the implementation machinery, has yet been the subject of a particular study. Some fifteen years back, Albert Waterston and other American authors studied the administrative shortcomings of Latin American education in general, and much of their analysis is still valid but many changes have taken place since then.

following remarks do not pretend to draw on any scientific analysis of a wealth of relevant data. Rather, they reflect this writer's first- and second-hand knowledge of what has happened in the Latin American educational field these last twenty years - knowledge that, though supported by a number of documents, mostly from the continent's Conferences of Ministers of Education, cannot help but be somewhat sketchy. Therefore it is highly probable that many statements, even if submitted with caution, will give rise to a number of objections or qualifications based on intimate knowledge of particular countries' situations. If such objections, however, should result in serious research, aimed to modify or to contradict on the basis of fact, the purpose of this paper will have been fulfilled. In other words, what follows is more in the nature of a series of plausible hypotheses to be proved or disproved than a definitive assessment calling for unquestioned acceptance.

1. Problems at the political level

The sustained political commitment necessary for steady educational development depends first of all on the stability of regimes and governments. Over one half of the Latin American countries have fulfilled this condition in the last twenty years, or at least during the last decade, under very different regimes, i.e. one-party systems with formal elections (Mexico, Dominican Republic), military governments with or without elections (Brazil, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru), an ideological dictatorship (Cuba), freely-elected, democratic governments (Colombia, Costa Rica, Venezuela). The rest of the countries have undergone more or less frequent and violent changes in the power structure (although Chile was quite stable for most of the period).

But governmental stability does not by itself guarantee the continuity or even the existence of political commitment to educational change. Attitudes in this respect have ranged from a most decided will to carry out planned reforms (Cuba, Peru, Panama, El Salvador - and Chile for many years) to different forms of benign neglect (Nicaragua, Paraguay). In between, a majority of countries, whether politically stable or not, have experienced ups and downs in the degree of governmental commitment in this direction although, when strong planning bodies are established on firm legal grounds (Venezuela is a good example), a consistent line of developmental actions can survive changes of government.

Furthermore, sustained educational policies and a resolute will are not enough to ensure that what is sought is really the development of education. In the absence of a clearly-perceived 'model' of a future society, or when such a model is in fact no more than the expanded projection of the present structure, that kind of continuity results in mere growth. The one element of change usually included in all policies is the increased rôle of vocational and technological training, which is expected to help speed up economic growth without challenging the overall socio-economic structures (the main case in point is Brazil, and that of El Salvador is somewhat similar). On the other hand, when the educational and cultural level of the country is already comparatively high and active groups within or near the government are accustomed to discussing fundamental issues, interesting though partial developments can occur even in the absence of definite official policies. It is perhaps the case in Argentina - or, in quite a different context, in Costa Rica, after a short-lived period of strong commitment that spread many new ideas. Such developments are apt to be taken up later as elements of new plans, under new governments.

In short, this most essential basis for successful educational development is, as a rule, too weak in Latin America. As a sustained feature, it is found only in a minority of countries, and emerges in other countries for short periods of time. Instead, all too often, power politics or mere opportunism take the place of policy, with frequent, unwarranted changes in goals and priorities. Thus, politically profitable, shallow but showy projects, take precedence over deeper issues (2), and able planners and administrators are formally or functionally displaced by political cronies of the Minister's. In one country, for instance, a school-building programme carefully drawn up on the basis of socio-economic criteria was completely upset in order to favour the Minister's home province and not to favour another provincial governor who was not to his liking. In another country, a sudden attempt to impose a single uniform for all secondary students provoked long discussions and strikes, while the urgent need for a functional reorganization of high schools was totally forgotten. And it is a common occurrence that able administrators, sent abroad to acquire badly needed specializations, come back to find themselves relegated

(1) One example: the abandonment of the permanent maintenance programme for poor rural school buildings in order to build more visible, urban secondary schools (Argentina, after 1969).

by the next Minister to posts where their abilities are wasted. In fact, many failings of the educational system, loosely blamed on "the administration", are really due to political shortcomings and shortsightedness.

However, such is the importance of the educational system in the modern world (and its weight in the national budget) that political leaders usually take a sincere interest in its development. The lack of definite, consistent policies springs not from ill-will, but from a shallowness of ideas on matters that require much deeper thinking than that derived from economic or security aspects. Hence the hesitation that can often be seen. On the one hand, medium and long term needs and trends of society, more or less clearly perceived by the rulers, seem to call for quite radical changes in education and are proclaimed as basic policies on very broad terms, but on the other hand, when detailed programmes to make those goals operational are proposed by the planners and administrators, fear of the unknown prevails (or perhaps it is fear of too-well-known, powerful pressure groups), so that the proposals are watered down, voided of any real impact, or their implementation is suspended mid-way. This has been the fate, among others, of many schemes devised over the years to provide <u>effective</u> education to the Indian populations of several countries in the region.

There is another fear, too, which affects the breadth and depth of developmental policies and noticeably weakens the likelihood of a strong political commitment, particularly in the case of education; i.e. fear, on the part of the politicians, of too open a debate on fundamental issues because it might lead to 'undesirable' conclusions. This takes us back to the question of democratic participation in the decision-making process. Debate is often invited, or it starts spontaneously, but only when the essential lines of the plan have been fixed - and often the details as well. So the issues are narrowed down: public discussion becomes in fact limited to the particular subjects and the particular aspects that the government has decided to include in the plan. But the choice of subjects, more often than not, begs the question of <u>which</u> issues are really the most relevant for progressive change. Of course, independent writers of a scholarly mind often do raise such awkward questions but they are hardly heard, since most people (teachers' associations, community groups, political parties) are too busy arguing over proposed measures which will directly affect them or their clientèle. Some actual examples of this narrowing down

of issues can be given here:

- In a certain country, a proposal was included in the plan to reduce the large number of school boards (almost ineffective because of their smallness), and to consolidate them into bigger units capable of mobilizing larger amounts of money for local school improvements. All the discussion centred on the administrative level at which such bodies should be set up (school, district, county?) from an almost exclusively political standpoint: who would appoint the board members, how would they relate to municipal authorities, and the like. But nobody questioned the actual role such popularly-constituted bodies could play in the qualitative improvement of education - i.e., in making schools, teachers, curricula, etc., more responsive to local needs.

- On another occasion, a proposal was made to increase by half an hour the daily schedule of primary schools (4 hours). This provoked heated arguments from the teachers' unions based on some old regulations. No one succeeded in placing this issue in its wider context: the proper role of teachers as guides of the children's development.

- Not once, but many times, and in many countries, angry discussions have taken place about increasing or decreasing the weekly time allotted to specific subject-matters, each group of specialized secondary teachers firmly upholding the overwhelming importance of its particular discipline. But nobody ever seems to question the wisdom of maintaining at all levels subject-centred curricula.

In all these cases, as in many others, had the political leaders launched an open discussion before deciding on the main lines of the plan or on particular proposals, there would have been a chance that the debate would have centred on fundamental questions in a more objective fashion. The resulting policies, even if not so 'perfect', could have been much more firmly sustained. As it was, in each of the instances given, the line finally taken was that of custom and tradition: lack of openmindedness about the real issues precluded any effective innovation.

One of the preceding examples points to the final problem to be discussed in this connection: the inordinate amount of power that the unions of teachers and other personnel are able to wield in most countries of the Latin American region. An explanation of this powerful position has been given (Chapter I. p.20).

Often monopolistic, these unions, although calling themsekves "professional associations", work in fact as well-organized pressure groups mainly seeking their own interests as opposed to those of the administration, to the point that sometimes headmasters or principals and other administrators have had to create their own association. This situation has its roots in a long history of denial of the right to participate, which gradually led the teachers, from feeling part of the system, to being no more than its employees. But, whatever the justifications, the present situation is one in which these unions have a negative impact on educational policies at least in two important ways:

- As they fight for ever-increasing salaries within a decidedly 'labour-intensive' industry, whatever budgetary increases can be made in real terms are gobbled up by salary costs, which usually represent around 90% of the budget. The other 10% is scarcely enough to provide for the most elementary supplies needed by the system as it is; almost nothing remains for development expenses which thus severely limits the policy choices unless other sources of funds can be tapped (1).

- The other main concern of the unions relates to the working conditions, nowadays strictly regulated in most cases by laws that were sanctioned as a defence against political arbitrariness at a time when the educational system was seen as a comparatively simple structure of teachers, headmasters and administrators. The complex needs of developing systems as regards types of personnel, functional units, diversified materials, communication channels and so on, were not contemplated in such laws, which have thus become, more often than not, a sort of straightjacket preventing the modernization of the system. Any attempt to change these laws is automatically regarded by the unions as a threat to their labour situation and privileges: administrative and pedagogical structures have thus become 'frozen'. It is remarkable that, the more 'advanced' the unions are politically, and the more they like grandiose rhetoric about 'structural change' in society, the more they tend - paradoxically - to stick to laws that, by protecting their professional rights, in fact fix the whole educational system's structure once and for all. It is easy to see that this instinctive resistance to legal changes constitutes also a serious limitation for policies of qualitative change. Indeed, quick and radical over-

(1) And even such other sources are often rejected by the unions as based on 'capitalistic' structures and leading to imperialist 'dependence'.

hauls of the system have only been possible in countries (Peru, El Salvador) when political authority was able and willing to use military backing. In all other cases, changes have to be laboriously negotiated, at the risk of seriously reducing their scope: in Costa Rica they remained mainly formal, in Panama they are being very slowly introduced, in Argentina they suffered many setbacks and modifications.

To sum up: a clear, long-sustained political commitment to educational development, which constitutes the first pre-condition for success, has seldom been found in Latin America during the last ten-to-twenty years. The missing element is sometimes political stability; in other cases it is policy consistency, or a firmly-rooted resolve about final goals. A not uncommon characteristic is the substitution of mere growth (perhaps including technical training) for real development related to social change. Finally, the political will is at times powerless to overcome opposition of interest groups, mainly the teachers' associations.

Most of these faults are linked to a lack of popular support, because of neglect to organize responsible participation by, or at least timely consultation with, all interested quarters. Administrators, including those in planning offices, cannot be expected to make up for the deficiences of political leadership, but they sometimes do to some extent: otherwise the present state of Latin American education would be much worse than it in fact is.

2. Deficiences in planning

Not all the failings in the planned development of education can be said to be due to political problems or to administrative shortcomings. The planning process as such, i.e. the link between general policies and actual performance, has often borne the seeds of failure within itself even though wrong policies and inefficient administration may also have sapped the foundations of good planning.

The most common problem is structural, i.e. wrong decisions on the position and role of the units specifically concerned with planning, and consequently, on the whole flow of activities which compose the planning and implementation process. There is no need to deal at length on the elementary mistake that was often committed in the early days of planning, and to which we have already referred (ch. II, p.1), i.e. the simple belief that setting up a Planning Unit (or Department, or Board ...) directly

linked to the Minister was enough to 'plan'. This stage has long been left behind. However, a practice still rampant in several countries may be seen as a sequel to that stage: the planning group is given all sorts of separate, dissimilar problems to solve - all those in fact that no other Department wants to take up. Thus the planning unit becomes the 'errand boy' of the Ministry, and no comprehensive plan is ever attempted. Some planning officers are indeed quite happy this way, as they are kept very busy but free of the exacting demands of real planning ...

The usual picture is quite different, though, and can be described in the context of overall government planning or Ministry planning. In most countries, big or small, the last ten or fifteen years have witnessed the emergence of formal planning 'systems' of an all-encompassing nature, including a central body (National Planning Council, Planning Ministry, sometimes the Ministry of Finance), sectoral units or departments in all Ministries and public corporations, and subordinate Councils or sectoral sub-units at the level of the States or Provinces, the regions and the counties or municipalities. Education can be present in this system in various forms: the most common is for the Ministry of Education to be represented on the National Council by the Minister himself, and in its secretariat by the chief of its 'sectoral' planning unit. In other cases, the national body takes the form of a vast State corporation, with its own Education Division, in which Ministry of Education officers may or may not be present.

This ambitious system poses impressive problems of coordination in a continent not particularly known for its skills in this field. One of two things usually happens. When the central corporation, or the secretariat of the Central Council, takes up its role in regard to education in a serious way, it is tempted to overstep its limits (out of contempt for the Ministry of Education's capability) and to enter into details that preempt the planning efforts of the Ministry, which then takes the least possible notice of the overall plan. More often, however, the Central Council becomes so engrossed in the problems of economic development, and particularly with the short-term contingencies so frequent in the Latin American type of economies, that it forgets all about education, except when overseeing the preparation of the annual budget. Then the Ministry of Education does its own planning with little or no reference to the

'national' plan (1). The fault in such cases lies not with the Ministry of Education, but with the narrow approach of the Central Government which insists on giving the finance authorities the upper hand in all aspects of development, and in making them the obligatory mediators between its general policy and the particular ministries in charge of 'social' sectors, when in fact, modern policies always have social objectives which could directly inspire educational planning. With perhaps the exception of Peru for a few years (and that of Cuba, for quite different reasons), overall coordination of planning has never worked properly: educational planning, for better or for worse, goes its own separate way. Of course, it is normally responsive to the social philosophy of the party in power, but not to the basically economy-oriented structure of overall planning.

This situation has another serious consequence: the lack of a mechanism to coordinate the planning of the Ministry of Education with that of other educational institutions outside its jurisdiction (mainly Universities and Vocational Training Institutes). None of the three accepts coordination by one of the others. A higher authority is necessary, but it should be of an educational, or at least a social, nature. The central (economic) planning body cannot fill this role and the Government offers no alternative solution. Spontaneous efforts at coordination between these three - Ministry, universities, vocational institutes - are frequently initiated, but never last, because there is no one to arbitrate on points of disagreement.

As regards the institutional situation inside the Ministry of Education, it is by no means certain that the frequently-criticized isolation of the Planning Unit - whatever its hierarchical level - has entirely disappeared in all cases. Except for short, intense periods of enthusiastic effort under an energetic leadership, planning groups are still kept apart by a number of barriers from the rest of the organization. Structurally, they are often given a special place, perhaps not too-well defined, in order to guarantee their immediate access to the Minister and his aides, but this very fact separates them from the day to day life of the Ministry.

(1) This is not the place to reopen discussion about the real possibilities of linking educational planning with (usually short-term) economic programmes and manpower forecasts. But, institutionally at least, the different 'time horizon' of the two kinds of planning makes mutual understanding extremely arduous, if not downright impossible.

The difference, in a few cases, has been emphasized by assigning the planning unit (for the best of motives) relatively ample facilities in a separate building. The planning personnel, or part of it, has been recruited outside the normal channels. In a bureaucratic context, all this has important psycho-social repercussions: the planning group is perceived as an alien group, if not as a potential enemy or at least a troublemaker, set apart by its esoteric language, its fanciful techniques and its different origins in many cases (social scientists rather than educators). The remoteness is even more noticeable in the case of the regional offices.

There are indeed effective ways to overcome these barriers and they have been put to work in some cases. The Directorates or Departments and the Planning Unit can be made to communicate regularly at the top, through the 'general staff' organization described earlier (Chapter II. p. 43). In each Department and Regional Office, small planning 'cells' can act as leaders of its planning activities, in permanent two-way contact with the central Planning unit and the latter can designate liaison officers with the main Departments among its own members. Better still, mixed standing committees can be appointed for each main sector of activity in the Ministry, made up of members of the Departments concerned and of the Planning body. Relatively simple as they are, however, these and other means of integrating a planning team with the rest of a Ministry are too often overlooked. Unless this situation is corrected, by any combination of the participative procedures we have indicated, the best of plans emanating from the planning centre will never really have a chance of success.

A word of warning is in place here concerning the decentralized planning 'cells' in different departments - and especially in the context of Ministries that, either by law or by force of habit, do not exert a very close control of such departments. If cells are too numerous and too generously staffed, the consequence is chaos - too many planning centres being equivalent to having no planning at all from the point of view of a consistent policy. Large countries with loose, straggling administrations are more likely to fall into this trap.

Whatever the organization for planning, success can also be jeopardized by poor staffing of the specific planning units. In a few cases, the interdisciplinary principle has been carried so far that the main body of planners is made up only of economists, architects and sociologists. Their planning will be unrealistic, their isolation will be greater, and

the planning 'counterparts' in other departments will tend to act independently of them. More frequent, however, is the opposite extreme, when only educators make up the planning team, or at least hold all the main positions - other professionals being legally barred from access to the top. In such cases planning will tend to be weak, too narrow in scope, and unimaginative. In at least one country this fault was compounded by the practice of sending to the Planning Department, officers from other Departments holding only teacher-training diplomas, when they were no longer wanted by their seniors. The result was that able planning professionals felt submerged by incompetency and began to give in their resignations. The 'ideal' mixture is not easy to find: it would consist of a balanced group of highly-competent professionals of various origins, so that all the components of planning are properly covered, and there is at least one officer who can talk on equal terms with each of the various Governmental and private institutions that have to be coordinated. And to be accepted by the educational system at large, the Planning chief has to be an educator, with specialized training and long experience; a professional from another discipline may be seen with sympathy, perhaps, but will not carry conviction. The contrary is true, of course, of the specialized sections or subdivisions of the Unit.

The average situation in Latin America is not too bad in this respect: most planning offices have at least some trained members, thanks mainly to the sustained efforts of UNESCO and the I.I.E.P. in the 60's and 70's. Most of them come from the teaching profession, but there is also a sprinkling of economists, sociologists, etc., who after specialized training are serving in planning offices on a regular basis. However, either because other personnel are not quite up to the mark, or due to the wrong type of political intervention, the technical aspects of planning frequently suffer from significant failings. We shall now analyze the most typical of these shortcomings, i.e. those most relevant for understanding the low level of effectiveness of educational plans in the region.

The technical failings

If the first pre-condition for the success of a plan is that everybody concerned knows what it is about and what it is trying to accomplish, it is the responsibility of the planning specialists to present the objectives and goals sanctioned by the authorities with logic and precision.

This is far from being always the case. First of all, it is not uncommon that the main objectives, or a substantial part of them, are imposed by the politician even before the planning process has started. The planners are only asked to justify a posteriori certain foregone conclusions. The so-called diagnosis becomes then an exercise in futility and the statement of objectives and goals cannot pretend to any real foundation. In fact, in other cases, the diagnosis is made independently but its conclusions prove not to the taste of the authorities, who then impose a different set of goals. The resulting statement of objectives, as before, cannot be very logical. When there is political instability and Governments and Ministers want to make their imprint on history quickly with some pet project, such situations frequently occur.

A quite different cause of lack of logic and precision in the setting of goals is weakness of quantitative planning techniques, which, given the large bibliography on this question, is particularly annoying and inexcusable. Part of the cause lies in the still widespread shortcomings in the field of educational statistics, i.e. uncertainty of vocabulary, ill-defined categories of data, confusing forms, incomplete and tardy collection, unreliable manual tabulation, wealth of useless tables and scarcity of relevant ones, inability to identify inconsistencies, long delays in publication ... Another factor is the usual lack of understanding, on the part of professional statisticians, of the particular kind of statistics needed for planning (as opposed to historical records), including a large number of cross-tabulations, growth rates, complex indices and the like. International organizations have made several attempts to correct these weaknesses, but apparently to no avail. A still more serious problem is the lack of interest in figures on the part of politicians and higher administrators. They generally want only gross numbers which can be used (often inaccurately because out of context) for propaganda purposes, but have no patience with statistical analysis or 'niceties' which often make all the difference in diagnosis. The planners themselves are not always trained in the use of statistics for projection purposes. They may have followed elaborate courses on the kind of statistical analysis useful for research, i.e. for evaluating the past or discovering tendencies, but they are unable properly to make forecasts - let alone to foresee different probabilities according to different hypotheses. That is why even quite

elaborate plans contain numerically stated goals that make little sense, leave unexplained gaps, or are downright fantastic.

In a good many cases, however, the objectives and goals of the plan are sufficiently precise and no inconsistencies are to be found between the various stated purposes. How is it that even then, the general effect is often confusing, so that no clear idea emerges of the overall changes that are being sought? Upon reflection, it becomes evident that there is no definite model behind the series of goals. This is perhaps the most serious technical fault planners can commit, but it is unfortunately a frequent occurrence. No clear-cut pattern has been followed for the arrangement of objectives and goals; little justification is given for the items which appear in the document, for the order in which they appear, or for omitting the ones that do not appear. If one turns then to the diagnosis that is presented as the basis for the plan, the same deficiency becomes apparent. The reader is given a number of shortcomings and problems of the current educational situation, but again there is no satisfactory explanation as to what was or was not examined in the first place, nor of the relationships among the various elements. The description is thus quite static: not only are its elements presented as if they were all equally important, but there is little explanation of their origins, little indication of their interdependence, little analysis of the kind of flows which take place within the system - because finally there is no clear conception of a system at all. It is obvious that in such cases planners do not have in mind a 'map' of the educational sub-system, nor of the larger social system of which education is a part. That is why there is no definite model for a comprehensive diagnosis, much less an integrated model of change in which every objective could find its proper place (1).

It might be argued, that since a number of items were enunciated one after the other in the diagnosis, and a series of objectives given in the plan proper, some sort of model was in fact followed. But the point is that such a 'model' - a word that must be taken in a very lax sense in such cases - was not explicitly defined by reflecting on the situation. It meant only the unquestioned, often unconscious acceptance of existing patterns, of old relationships between education and society and of those

(1) Some educational development plans are happy exceptions to this rule: Chile, Peru, Costa Rica. Their perusal will show what we are trying to express here.

among the various subdivisions of the educational structure. This very serious defect arises most probably from shortcomings in the training of educational planners. As we have seen, for the most part they are originally teachers, whose first training did not include any serious systems approach to educational issues. Further specific training does not usually include very much in this sense either, except some general background about 'education and society'. It focuses instead on individual techniques like statistics, student flow, school costs, perhaps school map, project preparation, and the like. But the 'macro' view of the whole socio-educational system (1) remains very weak, with the results we have outlined above: plan documents lack overall consistency and clearness of purpose. As a consequence, administrators, teachers and the general public, although unable to pinpoint the failings, experience a feeling of uncertainty about the whole thing: the plan cannot convey conviction nor generate enough energy for implementation.

Furthermore, the aims of a plan may look timid in scope and scarcely inspiring for a reason that is rarely talked about, i.e. premature and exaggerated preoccupation with financial constraints on the part of administrators, planners, or both. Of course, planning without reference to costs would be irresponsible, but on the other hand, a narrow financial approach can only cripple creative thinking and bring down planning to no more than an exercise in rearrangement. The teaching profession has often, and with reason, been accused of bland disregard of economic and financial realities, but a continuous harping on immediate budgetary problems can lead to the opposite extreme of meek surrender of important ideas which merit defence against the financial authorities.

After giving an appropriate form to the objectives of the plan, the essential task of the planning group is programming their attainment. By 'programming', many different things can be understood, according to the particular conditions of each country, that is, the overall politico-administrative organization, and the degree of participation that is allowed to the lower levels of the educational hierarchy and to the community. Thus, it may be that the planning machinery of the central Ministry only fixes the main programmes and their global goals and budgets, leaving the determination of regional and local goals and projects to lower levels, or

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(1) See Joël de Rosnay, "Le Macroscope"; Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1975.

the Ministry may define in considerable detail the various projects and their activities. Any intermediate combination of centralized decisions and decentralized programming can be adopted. Obviously we cannot study here all the technical mistakes that are wont to arise at the programming stage in Latin America. We shall refer only to a few issues which directly touch upon the administrative dimension, and which can generally be grouped under the heading of 'lack of functionality'.

Perhaps the most common sources of dysfunctionality in programming is over-ambition. This occurs particularly when a plan is prepared after a long period of stagnation and it is found that every sector and aspect of the educational system ought to be drastically modernized. Enthusiasm at being finally able to undertake long-delayed changes may then lead to overestimating the capabilities of the administration, and to programming such an excessive number of simultaneous actions that a good proportion of them will remain unexecuted. There should be no confusion between the necessary overall planning concept, which cannot forget any sector of the system (since they all interact with one another), and unrealistic attempts to do everything at once. The technical factor which may have been forgotten is the notion of priority, which, linked to a systems approach, should have led to choosing among the elements of the system those few points where carefully planned action will have the largest multiplier effect through successive operational stages (1).

But programming may be over-ambitious simply because it has been concentrated almost exclusively at the macro-level. Many more actions can be simultaneously and successfully carried out if they are undertaken by a micro-planning system. The main pre-condition for this is that the central offices should moderate their scope and give up their monopoly of initiatives. The regional and local offices, given minimal conditions, can develop their own projects, which taken all together will cover a much wider field than the central offices can ever hope to do, and which will be considerably better adapted to real conditions - and consequently much likelier to be implemented (2). For centralized systems who wish to decentralize (and almost all <u>say</u> that they do), the launching of a plan is a

(1) On this strategy, see ch. II, p. 54.

(2) A very valuable experience in this sense was that of Chile in the early 70's.

splendid opportunity to delegate powers to the lower levels. The very real responsibilities of devising and carrying out concrete projects will offset the disadvantages of granting a degree of autonomy to lower levels in other directions.

The real obstacle to micro-planning is that it needs a larger number of competent 'planners' to work in the regional offices, and perhaps in some local ones as well. But this difficulty should not be exaggerated. First, if decentralization is real, some planning officers can be spared in the Ministry and sent to regional offices, where they can work for the region as a whole and provide guidance to local administrators. Secondly, the skills needed for comparatively small local projects are not exceptionally high. Modern training (rather, re-training) of school directors and supervisors in several countries does usually include basic planning concepts and techniques, which should be enough if the regional offices provide complementary guidance. Finally, decentralized micro-planning need not be started everywhere at the same time: the practical knowledge gained in the first few cases can later be used in other areas and experienced officers can be rotated accordingly. The greatest challenge is for the central planning team to change its customary ways: from planning and programming in detail for everybody else, it must patiently undertake to teach and guide others so that they plan by themselves. But this can be done; in fact, the most successful experiments in 'nuclear' organization are also experiences of micro-planning (see below, Chapter IV, pp. 100-103).

But, whether at the 'macro' or the 'micro' level, dysfunctionality in programming often happens when, as we said earlier, a plan is prepared without due attention to the systematic nature of formal education, that is to say, when action is decided on a particular point of the system without foreseeing the consequences on other components. Unforeseen and unwanted secondary effects are all too common, even when they could have been foreseen if only attention had been paid to systems relationships. Thus, in certain countries, universities are flooded by a sudden increase in demand after expansion of secondary education without providing non-university outlets; in others, raising the level of teacher-training has reduced sources of rural teachers. In at least one case, inadequately considered extension of agricultural secondary education, offered as the only stream in rural areas, has resulted in spending more money to produce both less able University entrants and a higher level of educated

unemployed, since there are no jobs for so many 'bachelors' in agronomy. At the same time the countryside is as deprived as before of other needed middle-level technicians. In such cases, it is not a question of plans not being implemented: it is the implementation of some programmes which defeats the expressed overall aims of the plan.

Then, the most functional programmes require careful organization of implementation: determining who shall do what, when, with whom, with what means and resources ... Theoreticians do not agree on whether such organization is still part of the 'programming' stage, coming under the responsibility of planners, or if it is already the first step of the 'execution' stage, in the hands of administrators. This discussion is in any case an idle one, once it is accepted that the whole planning process must be participative. In point of fact, planners usually seek the advice of experienced administrators when drawing up programmes, whereas the latter consult the planners when taking organizational decisions for implementing programmes. What should be stressed here is, first, that in some cases still not enough attention is given to clearly setting out the responsibilities and other practical details of implementation. The assumption seems to be that, once the information about the sanctioned programmes has arrived at field levels (headmasters and supervisors), the right actions will automatically follow, everyone spontaneously fulfilling his or her role. The truth is, of course, that successful implementation requires that each officer along the chain of command should define - after reasonable consultation - the responsibilities of those at the next level, including deadlines and all other relevant detail.

The second point to be emphasized is that both planners and line administrators at the central offices must - in the usual Latin American context - deploy very specific and strenuous efforts to ensure the logistics of the whole operation, by helping and prodding the 'support' administrators. The constant failure of practically all Latin American administrations to keep to scheduled dates on things as simple, theoretically speaking as distribution of books and teaching materials, appointment of teachers, signing of orders, payment of salaries, etc., is something that defies understanding. Given the special logistic demands required for plan implementation, such inefficiency amounts to sabotage of the national effort.

But the most important support service for the execution stage is communication, and this depends heavily on the line administrators them-

selves. In most countries, the communication network is every bit as inefficient as the logistic services. In part this is due, as we will explain later (Chapter IV), to the curious reluctance to spend comparatively minor sums on modern means of communication, like radio, telephone, or even transportation. But there is also a more subtle problem, i.e. an uncommunicative attitude on the part of the lower hierarchical levels (teachers, headmasters, supervisors) as if they feared that every report will be used to criticize their shortcomings, and not - as it should - to enable higher authorities to give help. And of course, in the context of old-fashioned authoritarian systems, they may well be right. It is then up to the higher level officials to convince their subordinates, by deed rather than by word, that a smooth flow of information is a pre-condition for assistance and practical help in the performance of duties. The establishment of a new type of middle-level officer to provide technical aid, instead of the traditional inspection as suggested elsewhere (see Chapter IV, p.109) would probably be the most decisive factor in securing a constant and more reliable flow of information. On the other hand, whatever information reaches the decision-making levels is often useless because of the primitive methods for circulating, storing and retrieving it.

In the last analysis, however, most of the usual shortcomings affecting the implementation of plans are related to a deeper issue: that of the psycho-social context, or in other words, the question of <u>participation.</u> The success of development plans depends to a large measure on everybody involved feeling that the process is not something imposed from above. In a bureaucratic context this is not easy. The greatest successes have occurred where people have been carried away by a strong current of ideas and ideals - i.e. in some 'revolutionary' situation, like that of Peru around 1970. But this is not an ordinary situation. The initial current of change has to be taken over by firm political leadership. As regards bureaucracy, the essential thing is a definite, development-oriented frame of reference which covers everyone and which can be used to assess situations, purposes and programmes with the least possible ambiguity. Unfortunately, a specific time is seldom set aside for this preparatory, fundamental task of working out an agreement on the essential concepts, standards and vocabulary, at least among all the professional staff of the Ministry (with the planners participating on an equal footing). The 'model of analysis' thus obtained would provide an incomparably better chance, not

only of talking the same language, but of uniting wills around a common task - and later on, of evolving a 'model of change', shared by everybody, to serve as a common basis for all action programmes and as common standards for evaluation and feedback. No significant barriers between planners and administrators could exist after this common ground had been jointly prepared.

The planners also share the responsibility, with the politicians and the whole administration, for setting up truly participative structures involving all levels of the educational system and interested sectors of the community, according to the principles already outlined (Ch. II, 55 ff.). In Latin America, organized participation has so far been minimal; at the most, consultation has been used, more on already structured plans than during preparation. However, lower officials, teachers, parents and students are increasingly demanding to be heard beforehand, even under undemocratic political regimes. And if these demands are not acceded to, people have effective means of blocking (at least by sheer inertia) the programmes they do not agree with, since the educational system is by nature much more vulnerable than other governmental structures - in real contents if not in outward forms. Of course, plans established with widespread participation at lower levels will be technically less satisfying, but they will be implemented, which is all that really matters in the end.

IV. THE USUAL SHORTCOMINGS: THE ADMINISTRATION PROPER

In the years when the planning approach to educational development was first being adopted under the rather simplistic assumptions we have already discussed.(Chap.II,p.32), little effort was devoted to changing administration in order to make it development-minded. The emphasis was rather on improving its effectiveness in daily operations so that it could become an adequate instrument for the planning process, which, by definition, was a separate task being carried out by a group of specialists as advisers to the politicians. Experience (mainly of failures) and further theoretical work gradually led to a better understanding of the full involvement that was required from the whole administration in all aspects and steps of the planning and development process. Thus, in the last decade, conscious efforts were made in nearly all Latin American countries with the aim of obtaining a new type of educational administration, and new attitudes and behaviour on the part of administrators.

By and large, it cannot be said that these efforts have been very successful. It is true that in most countries, effectiveness of day-to-day administration has improved in some degree, particularly at the central level, although many shortcomings are still apparent. It is true also that, in those countries where overall planning was seriously attempted, a significant number of administrators (mostly at higher levels of responsibility) adopted a new approach, which usually went together with structural revampings of the administrative organization and some degree of deconcentration. However, not only did some countries not make noticeable progress in this direction, but even in the most advanced cases some sections of the administration did not wholly enter into the new spirit, and the renewal of procedures always lagged behind.

A hard look at this situation would probably identify, as the main source of these shortcomings, a lack of really deep commitment to change on the part of the administrators - or perhaps, even more their lack of identification with and of loyalty to the educational enterprise. This is apparent from the desultory way many of them (middle- and lower-level officers usually, but sometimes higher ones as well) go about their duties, protected from the consequences by the customary looseness of controls. Some squander their time and that of other people. Comparatively low pay in public

administration may have a lot to do with this lax attitude. It is certainly the reason why a number of education officers take up a second job which may impinge on their official duty hours and surely interferes with their concentration at work. When proposals for change are adopted, they may understand the reasons for change, intellectually agree with them, and follow, up to a point, the movement initiated from above, but, on top of their basically lax attitude, they are often hardened by experience of past failures and sudden policy changes. Therefore they do not want to commit themselves too far to the new movement, especially not to the extent of taking initiatives. They hope to be able at any moment to fall back into the old routine and preserve their posts which is their central anxiety. The process thus lacks an essential dynamic factor.

This unsatisfactory attitude can be partly explained by a wariness about the customary deceptiveness of political life, which could at any moment threaten security of tenure or at least advancement prospects. But it has also another source in defects in administrators' training. In most cases, such training has been merely that of primary or secondary teachers, perhaps with a few additional short courses on modern administration. Until very recently the training of teachers in Normal Schools or Universities did not include any serious introduction to the larger issues of the role of education (much less of the educational <u>system</u>) in the concrete conditions of a given society. Forther training, especially when done under the aegis of international organizations, did cover this aspect, usually as its starting point. However, it was communicated to personalities already strongly formed, so that adhesion to those new views would not always carry enough strength to change the trainees' deeply-rooted professional methods of work. For instance, this kind of course may have clearly brought home the logic of analyzing the educational system from the standpoint of sociology and economics, but once back in the job, the tendency to look at everything from the narrow view of the school system will be almost irresistible, since the new wider analysis has not had time to fashion new mental habits. Thus, the most fundamental condition of a development-minded administration - the pursuit of new kinds of educational goals - rests on too weak a basis to sustain a drive to administrative change.

Two further deficiencies of Latin American administrative systems have to be pointed out at this general level, although there is no need to analyze them in detail since they have already been dealt with earlier (Ch. I, pp. 14 ff) and have been amply studied elsewhere. The first concerns the unnecessary and dysfunctional complexity of administrative structures, and still more, of the maze of laws and regulations that govern functions and procedures. These laws or regulations were usually established years ago for the purposes of traditional or 'caretaker' administration, and greatly cramp the style of developmental actions. This is still the prevailing situation in most countries of the region, reaching incredible extremes in large federal countries like Argentina, but also seriously slowing down improvements in small ones like Costa Rica.

The second point is the widespread practice, among middle and lower level administrators, of evading responsibility by refusing to take decisions even on the simplest matters and referring everything back to higher levels. Besides being a negation of the principle of participation, it causes in practice a 'bottleneck effect', i.e. unwarranted delays and encroaching on the time of the highest authorities to think out important issues. However, it is not uncommon for this practice to be encouraged by the central administrators themselves, ostensibly to ensure better control of the system, but in fact - perhaps unconsciously - as an excuse for not having to take a share of responsibility in making the most important decisions.

The preceding remarks of a general nature, apply to all levels of administration. For the purpose of this paper, it is important now to carry the analysis to at least two clearly distinct levels of educational administration - the central offices and the regional and local authorities - which are affected by considerably different sorts of problems.

1. At the central level

The organizational diagrams ('organigrams') of Latin American Ministries of Education show a bewildering array of different units, designated by a large variety of ill-defined terms (1). A closer look, however,

(1) In alphabetical order: Administración (meaning Budget and Accounting), Asesoría, Centro, Comisión, Comité, Consejo, Departmento, Dirección (sometimes Nacional or General), Inspección or Inspectoría, Instituto, Jefatura, Junta, Oficina, Sección, Secretaría, Servicio, Supervisión, Unidad. Their usage is not uniform, even within one Ministry, and reflects the lack of precision in defining administrative categories and functional levels.

will identify a number of common features which are useful for analyzing the capacity of the system to carry out the administrative tasks of educational development.

(a) At the top, under the Minister, there may be one or more Vice-Ministers, Under-Secretaries or Directors-General ('Director Superior' - Higher Director - in Peru). These posts are of political origin, but are sometimes supposed to represent the highest technical level. When there is at this level a single post, whose jurisdiction coincides with the Minister's, there is always the danger of conflicts of competence - unless the Minister is too busy presiding over a number of consultative bodies placed laterally in the diagram: National Education Council, Coordinating Committees of various kinds, UNESCO National Commission, University Board, and so on. The present tendency, however, is to have at least two posts at this level: one for Education as such, the other for the administrative supporting services - and perhaps a third one for "Culture" (Museums, Theatres, Orchestras, Sports, Youth, and so on), although this is often set apart as a different Ministry. Sometimes the Planning body (Office, Unit, Committee ...) is also directly attached to the Minister.

(b) The different supporting services are usually grouped under a few Directorates (Personnel, Budget/Accounting, Supplies, etc.), but there are still cases where each individual office of this type - they may be over a dozen - are placed directly at the Vice-ministerial level. Although they are intended as 'support', in fact they often exert unchecked executive authority in their respective fields over the whole system. Hence the logistics problems, for no one really coordinates them either amongst themselves or with specifically educational units.

(c) The services of a strictly educational nature are the ones more often modified, a fact which reflects fundamental undertainties as to their roles. Up to ten or fifteen years ago (and some Ministries are still basically at that stage) the only administrative divisions were those corresponding to each level and type of school: Directorates for Primary and Secondary education, the first perhaps including departments for pre-school, adult and special education. Their role was simple and limited: creating schools and school districts, and controlling their activities through the Inspectorate - the latter responsibility being all that the Ministry (of 'Public Instruction') had in those days.Sporadic 'reforms' centred on

curricular changes, were made by special, temporary committees, since this was not considered a permanent task. "Professional" or technical education, which became the concern of Ministries at different epochs as industrialization began, was sometimes quite separate from the Ministry, but usually became part of it, as a department of the Secondary Education Directorate or on its own (1).

In recent years, however, as new kinds of developmental requirements were made, a new generation of administrative units began to appear, based on a division not of levels but of functions: curriculum development, educational materials, evaluation, in-service teacher training and educational planning. At the same time older units acquired new scope and dimensions: literacy, rural education, special education (for the handicapped), school vegetable gardens, and so on. As these new units did not fit into the old-fashioned scheme of organization, they were attributed rather erratically to this or that department or directorate (often the higher-level one that had initiated them), or were simply left adrift in administrative space, without the precise links that could make them effective.

(d) What all this means is that two different, overlapping criteria for administrative organization coexist in most Ministries of the region: the old principle of organization by level and type of schools, and the new one of organization by function. Carried to the extreme, the first would reflect (and perpetuate) the division of the educational system into sharply contrasting levels and streams, and would require inside each Directorate separate units for developmental action (planning, curriculum, materials, training, etc.); the second would eliminate the administrative differences between levels and streams, and take care of the curriculum, planning, materials, etc., of the whole system - only allowing for level distinctions in the supervision and control machinery. The first would probably be more immediately effective but also more conservative, and more prone to centralization; the second would probably lose some standardization for the sake of integrality of development in each area, and requires

(1) Institutions of vocational training ("Formacion profesional") are usually kept outside the reach of the Ministry of Education, and they fare all the better for it - but the coordination problems are monumental.

a good deal of decentralization. But in fact, the uneasy coexistence of both principles leads to ineffective use of the development-oriented parts of the machinery, while depriving the older departments of instruments for qualitative improvement: the worst of both worlds. This fact alone explains much of the slowness and fickleness of educational progress: the 'line' departments have the authority but lack the 'know-how' of change; the 'staff' ones have the know-how but lack the means for real impact (1).

Three consequences of these structural weaknesses are clearly noticeable. The first is the reinforcing of the usual bureaucratic tendency to red tape combined with a lack of relevant information. As the different departments do not trust each other, not only do their communications become more formal (more written notes - we must keep records of what we really said), but any decision has to go through many offices (no one must be allowed to invade my field). On the other hand, really interesting information is jealously kept for oneself, so that one can be the first to take it to the Minister - and make sure that nobody will steal one's pet project. A second consequence is the tendency to "short-circuit" the hierarchical lines and go directly to the Minister or the Under-Secretary, who will then take a decision on individual information and initiative - while the proper authority is kept in the dark. Finally, all this is part of the general complaint about poor coordination inside the Ministry: the insularity of line and staff departments, of line departments amongst themselves, and of all departments and the support services, leading to overlapping or contradictory measures which baffle and immobilize lesser officers in the field.

At the level of the Government as a whole, similar structural failings (poor definition of competences, mixture of institutional and functional criteria, bad communications) produce similar effects which weaken overall support for educational development. This is most damaging when it affects the relationship between the Ministry of Education and that of Planning (or whoever has the overall responsibility for development budgets),

(1) In Costa Rica (1972) the momentum of the Educational Plan led to a completely new, function-oriented administrative structure, but when the corresponding decentralization was being prepared, a new Minister, fearful of losing discretionary power, changed his mind about the whole scheme. In Peru, the 'line' organization was kept in a modified form, but the 'staff' principle was given much weight at decentralized levels assisted by a National Institute of Educational Research and Development.

though it must be observed that a large part of the uncooperative attitude of the Education sector (not only the Ministry) is a reaction to the exclusively economic approach to educational matters taken by central planning authorities.

Coming now to the staffing of central offices, a problem found virtually everywhere in Latin America is the imbalance between experience and up-to-date training - or, more accurately, their uneven distribution. On the one hand, after many years of efforts throughout the continent, a good number of key officers are trained at an adequate level, especially in the planning and planning-related units. On the other, important positions are always held by old Ministry hands possessing invaluable experience. The problem lies in that often those who have the experience lack the modern training, and vice-versa. This makes for awkward relations and mutual distrust between the two groups, all the more so since 'experience' tends to accumulate in the slowly-growing 'line' departments - owing to customary promotion by seniority - whereas modern training is concentrated in the 'staff' units, most of which were set up at a stroke and manned through some sort of open competition.

Moreover, not all the university diplomas or other high-level training held by 'staff' department officers are quite up to the standard needed. Especially in the technico-pedagogical units in charge of curriculum development and of technical assistance ("asesoria") to teachers in the field, the most common situation is that the personnel are (a) very well qualified in their specific subjects (maths, language, etc.), (b) a little less qualified in the teaching methodologies, and (c) very little or not at all knowledgeable on deeper educational issues. In fact, even at present, higher training most often neglects such questions as what is the importance of a specific discipline in the whole curriculum, what is the contribution of curricular 'learning' to whatever real education can be acquired at school, or what relevance school education has to a specific society's social, economic and cultural needs and prospects. Emphasis on each particular discipline is a source of difficulty when it comes to finding a common language and to agreeing on a common stand for devising and disseminating the best overall development programme. There are rather a lot of disputes over time allotments for each discipline, basic misunderstandings with evaluation specialists or other general pedagogical problems, and a large measure of isolation in the counselling of schools and teachers in the various

disciplines.

Similar problems, perhaps in a more acute form, are found in relation to the staff in charge of strictly administrative duties: personnel management, statistics, budgeting and accounting, and so on. This type of personnel comes from two sources: either they are simply teachers, who because of their proven reliability and perhaps of some disciplinary affinity were promoted to these offices, or they were recruited from the ranks of professional statisticians, accountants, etc. In the first case they lack the specific techniques of the job (certainly the most sophisticated, sometimes even the basic ones); in the second, they cannot easily adjust their technical expertise and their overall attitudeto the particular features and needs of the educational system. In both cases, therefore, even when wholehearted dedication is given to the job, the technical efficiency of the administrative machinery leaves much to be desired. Furthermore, for both cases, the training component most sorely missed is the systematic development of abilities for human communication and team work. Indeed, this component is practically absent from most specialized training, except perhaps under the form of rather shallow 'group dynamics' techniques. And even this did not exist when the the older administrators (at present, very often, the highest formal leaders) underwent their training.

Of course, effective leadership is not the automatic consequence of good psycho-social training: the most effective leaders are usually born, not made. Nevertheless, moderately-endowed people <u>can</u> improve their performance as group leaders by proper training. However, the main weakness is that the standard procedures for identifying and appointing formal leaders (i.e. for filling responsible administrative positions), if at all systematic, take into account every variable (diplomas, seniority, published research) <u>except</u> leadership abilities. Of course the latter can only be appraised by means of value judgements, which are abhorrent to the standard rules of the civil service and still more to the egalitarianism of professional associations. Identifying leadership qualities would perhaps have to include elections - but of this, more later.

At the modest but basic level of office organization, the most common situation is one of inefficiency. Routine procedures, not greatly modified since the days when Ministries were many times smaller and could

work on almost 'domestic' lines, are permanent sources of delay and confusion on the simplest matters. A great many processes that could profitably be mechanized are still done by hand. Secretaries and typists with high qualifications cannot be recruited since salaries are usually much lower than in private business. The few really competent typists, for instance, are the subject of disputes among the higher officers. As a rule, archives are badly arranged and retrieving documents for consultation can easily become a nightmare. Daily transactions like appointing a substitute teacher or authorizing normal expenditure have to pass through literally dozens of offices and collect innumerable signatures. "La firma del despacho" (signing the routine documents) takes an unconscionable proportion of the Minister's and other high officials' daily time. Thus, streamlining office procedures is a frequent preoccupation and often leads to engaging external 'O and M' contractors - but nearly always, the older personnel make them complicated again. This situation is often the main cause of the low opinion in which the Ministry is held by teachers and field officers in virtually every country - an attitude making it very difficult to win them over for substantial reforms.

Whatever the weaknesses attributable to their recruitment and training, administrators are there when a development plan is attempted, and cannot be put aside to make place for another type of personnel. The way to improvement has then to be on-the-job training: and all countries in the region have resorted to it, repeatedly if not systematically, and with uneven results. One facet explains in part the comparatively low returns of such efforts and that is the lack of incentives for personal and professional upgrading. Most administrative career systems accord priority to seniority over all other criteria for advancement and salary increases. The latter, especially, are usually automatic, whether one undergoes further training or not. Also many middle-level administrative posts are professional 'dead-ends'. Even when promotion is theoretically possible, higher posts are so few in comparison with the lower-level ones that the chances of advancement are very small. For the few positions available, the politically active have more chance than the specially gifted and trained. In some countries where there is a well-established system of retirement, comparatively high-level posts are often given to those nearing the age limit, so that they can retire in more favourable conditions, but such people are not likely to be very keen on promoting change!

There are, in short, quite a number of features built in the administrative system that make it very difficult to change to a development-oriented style of administration (1). The structural defects are difficult enough to overcome, but those relating to the personnel are more serious. That is why overall improvement has been so slow during the last twenty years, except in the very few cases when a clear view of the problems has coincided with a strong political will and a dynamic style of government, resulting in sudden enlargement of the machinery and differentiation of administrative posts. In such cases, a rapid intake of new personnel, better trained and highly motivated, has succeeded in removing old defects and has obliged officials using old methods to change or to leave.

2. At the regional and local levels

The middle and lower levels of management, although comprising many categories, which are far from uniform, have to be discussed together because there is a lot of overlapping among them.

The basic levels we have to consider are three, practically everywhere in the world: the region, the district and the school. But there are often intermediate steps that complicate the issues: mainly the sub-regions or "zones", and the nuclei.

The educational 'regions' are in most countries a well-established administrative unit, whether under this or another name. They may coincide with the political subdivisions of the country (states, provinces, or departments). But in many cases their boundaries cut across such subdivisions. More important, they do not usually coincide either with the 'regionalization' of other governmental departments (health, agriculture, finance, police ...)or with 'development' regions set up for overall plan-

(1) Two other problems (reluctance to recruit from the ranks of non-educational professionals, and lack of personal contacts with field-level officers) have already been discussed (Ch. II, pp. 50-48).

ning purposes (1). This is the first factor that makes it extremely difficult to carry out coordinated development actions in the field effectively. Recognizing this, some governments (Peru, Costa Rica, Venezuela) have tried or are trying to establish uniform regional subdivisions for every sector, including ideally some sort of regional development council made up of delegates of each Ministry and representatives of local authorities and private enterprises. However, this arrangement is still the exception.

It should be noted that usually educational administration 'regions' do not mean that all formal education within their limits comes under the Regional Director's authority. More often than not, he has jurisdiction only over primary schools (and the pre-school level, if at all significant), whereas the secondary and technical schools come directly under the Ministry. Literacy and adult education are often included in the region; special education almost never is. From the point of view of educational 'systems', this situation is quite illogical, but it springs from historical reasons since Ministries of Education (or of 'Public Instruction') were in fact originally ministries of primary education. They were established in the last century in order to implement educational laws whose only concern was 'popular' education - i.e. elementary schooling for the children of the 'people'. Later the Ministries incorporated secondary schools, once these started to spread across the country. Later still, technical and vocational institutions were included. Special education in some cases has still not been put under the Ministry of Education but may be organized by a separate body, like the I.P.H.E. of Panama. For each category of establishment a separate Department or Directorate was created in the Ministry, with different administrative arrangements for controlling field-

(1) In this matter Argentina is a very special case. Under a Federal constitution, its 22 provinces have full Governments, including Ministries of Education, so what we say here about the "central" level has to be applied to each province. The latter have no 'regions', but only school districts. Of late, development regions have been created, each one comprising several provinces, with coordinating but not executive bodies - so that the term 'region' has quite a different meaning. Secondary schools, however, come directly under the Federal Government, although many provinces and some Universities also have their own high schools. Universities are coordinated by two national councils (for public and private institutions), at present submitted to the authority of the Federal Minister of Education. The overall system for coordination of educational development is thus much more complicated than anywhere else.

level activities. Thus, for the ordinary student, the passage from, say, primary to secondary education means in practice changing from one educational system to another, regulated by quite different rules. And as regards the implementation of development programmes, it means having to mobilize several different administrative channels accustomed to different ministrative methods. It is not surprising that real progress is slow and inefficient.

In most cases, moreover, the regional offices - whatever their jurisdiction - are not really decentralized bodies, sometimes not even 'deconcentrated' ones, since they have no real powers of decision. They function rather as a transmission mechanism within the whole machinery. They may consolidate reports from lower levels and make recommendations about the budget or other matters, but every final decision must come from the Ministry. Attempts have been made to redefine their functions so as to give them some real power over, e.g. personnel administration, but almost invariable there is a clause that requires the intervention of the central authority, usually by way of 'confirmation'. This is inevitable as long as the appointments to regional posts are made solely by the highest authority.

In the few cases where sub-regional divisions exist ('areas' or 'zones'), the situation is the same. They are devices designed to facilitate communications, particularly the transmission of paperwork, not to decentralize decisions, or at least to give regions and sub-regions some real say in decisions affecting them. This lack of participation is a key weakness in any reform implementation process.

The school <u>districts</u> (or 'circuits' in some countries) are subdivisions of the educational regions in the strict sense, i.e. they are geographical groupings of <u>primary</u> schools, with one inspector or supervisor assigned to each of them. They were usually created by the first Education Laws of the XIXth Century and have not changed very much ever since. They comprise in most cases from 25 to 40 schools - more in rural districts, less in urban zones (but with more teachers and pupils) but in a few cases they are considerably larger. Even when regional offices have jurisdiction over all levels of the system, districts are confined to elementary schools. This is easily understandable, since the district supervisors (and very often the regional directors as well) come from the ranks of primary teachers,

and could not very well be accepted as superiors by secondary teachers. An intermediate situation occurs in some places (e.g. El Salvador) where a new educational structure of basic and diversified education (9 + 3) has been substituted for the old one of primary and secondary (6 + 6): the whole 'basic' education, including the former first cycle of secondary level, comes under the authority of the district supervisors, who have received some additional training.

On the whole, this amounts to saying that the 'traditional' region/district organization is far from being an apt instrument for carrying out development activities intended to implement radical educational change. At best, it can facilitate the downwards transmission of orders and directives, and the upwards communication of reports, without generating any great commitment to the development process. At worst, it is a cumbersome machinery which saps innovative drive. The whole structure should be reshaped under the twin principles of participation and decentralization, keeping explicitly in mind the need for a smoothly working machinery to encourage, disseminate and implement new ideas and procedures appropriate to actual needs. The latter are never so clearly felt as at the grass-roots level. This fact was sufficiently appreciated in a number of countries for some significant changes to have been made. For instance, consolidation of administrative units of all Government departments at regional level (Chile, Panama, Peru), together with some effective delegation of power so that definite, coordinated actions could be carried out. But perhaps the most interesting trend along these lines in Latin America has been the comparatively rapid spread of the 'nuclearization' idea.

Before considering it, however, and since nuclear organization comes somewhere between the district and the school, we should devote a few lines to analyzing the lowest administrative level in the traditional scheme, that of <u>individual schools.</u> The role assigned to them in the theoretical administrative network is based on misconception arising from the text of most education laws, i.e. the assumption that all schools are similar and based on the model found in big urban areas (a biggish building comprising at least half a dozen classrooms plus annexes, the same number of teachers, a full-time headmaster and some auxiliary staff, etc.). The range of administrative and pedagogical duties expected from the headmaster, however, becomes totally different when the 'school' consists of a single room with a single teacher having to deal with a group of 6 to 14-year olds officially

following every grade of primary schooling; far from any educational or logistic support. And this is the situation of a third to a half of all schools in some countries and of many more than half in rural areas. The case is not so different for secondary schools, since these have spread to many small towns in the last ten or twenty years. Overall enrolment rapidly expanded both in small schools (often less than ten teachers with almost no services) and very large ones (perhaps three thousand or more students, with so many teachers that the principal has difficulty in knowing them by name). In both cases management is unable to cope, whether for lack of resources or because of the excessive complexity and multiplicity of the tasks. Both situations prevent the principal and his usually too small group of immediate assistants from sustained action to institute pedagogical and administrative change.

If the previous remarks seem to dwell too much on the quantitative aspects (but quantity is of course basic for administration), the organizational features of individual schools are still more unsuitable for developmental purposes. In too many cases, the laws and regulations governing the distribution of duties among school staff date back from the time when a school was conceived merely as the sum of individual classroom-teaching activities, carried out by a certain number of teachers under the control of a headmaster or principal, helped perhaps by a secretary and some menial staff. No time was allowed, nor other provisions made, for any kind of teamwork; apparently collective decisions were only required for taking severe disciplinary measures. When 'new' ideas about the collective nature of school education could no longer be ignored, and extra-curricular activities could no longer be left to the goodwill of a few 'volunteers' among the staff, more complex forms of internal organization had to be found. It appeared then that the greatest difficulty was (and still is in many places) how to fit a few hours for general meetings or smaller group work into the weekly schedule, for with the development of 'labour' regulations, all such meetings were legally considered as an 'extra' load on the teachers (1).

This is particularly true of secondary-level schools, where the salary is still calculated strictly according to the weekly hours of presence

(1) A usual solution was, and is, the shortening of the students' already scarce classroom time: teachers attend meetings <u>instead of</u> teaching.

in the classroom, and not (as in the primary level) to the total amount of time spent in and for the school (1). This survival of the tradition of secondary teaching being performed part-time by local professionals (doctors, lawyers, priests, engineers ...) does not mean that the teachers can earn a living just by working a few hours per week - only that they teach their narrowly-conceived disciplines in more than one school, in order to amass enough weekly periods to make a satisfactory salary. Thus they are seldom 'free' to attend meetings in any of the two, three or four schools in which they work. For the school's principal this means that he cannot, with the few teachers that really belong to his school, organize a stable pedagogical unit. Thus he is legally virtually prevented from establishing on a regular basis any mechanisms to deal with such tasks as planning the pedagogical progress of his school. In this situation, his powers of persuasion (which, as we have seen, he has not been helped to develop) become doubly important: for before persuading his personnel jointly to adopt some change, he has to persuade them to agree to meet and look at the proposals for change ... This fact alone, which arises from obsolete regulations - and not the qualifications of the teachers, which are not so bad - is in this writer's opinion the main explanation of the great disparities in plan implementation that have been observed between different schools.

Compared to the negative conditions created by the administrative rules, the difficulties usually listed as explanations for failures of plan implementation at the lower levels no longer look so decisive. I refer to the continual complaints about the lack of equipment, books, teaching aids, laboratory supplies, building maintenance, and so on. That these important (sometimes essential) resources should be missing completely, arrive too late, or in inadequate amounts, etc., undoubtedly has a serious effect on the implementation of reforms. However, these shortcomings are not a

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(1) In its reform of ten years ago, El Salvador performed the extraordinary feat, against strong opposition, of putting the 'third cycle' teachers (formerly, the first cycle of secondary level) to work on a full-time basis. No other country to my knowledge has dared to imitate this example.

consequence of administrative rules themselves (1), but rather of the failure to comply with them. The means to overcome such defects are known, whereas the structural failings described above are supported by regulations, and embody deeply-entrenched attitudes which are more difficult to change. Furthermore, if schools and districts were as unanimous and strong-willed in their claims for essential material facilities as they are about salaries, they would surely obtain better results. But the lack of such facilities serves as an alibi, albeit unconscious, for the poor outcomes of many teachers' work. Where there is a genuine will to work, many local resources can be and are tapped to compensate for at least some of the missing things. In short, Latin American schools, except for a number of extreme cases, do not fail to implement reforms for material reasons, but because of built-in administrative obstacles based on latent conservative attitudes.

The preceding analysis of administration at regional and local levels can be summed up as follows:

- In most countries, 'the' educational system is an abstraction, existing only in the minds of a few at the top levels. In the field there are in fact several independent school systems - primary, secondary, technical, non formal - each one with its individual authority, its different administrative structure and procedures, without working contacts one with the other. The consistency of a national plan cannot be maintained when it is applied in the field.

- In addition, when directives of the plan concerning qualitative improvement arrive at individual schools, the careful team-work necessary to implement them cannot be organized due to built-in obstacles in the internal structure, regulations and labour conditions of the schools.

- A tendency to reform the whole administration because of such problems is noticeable almost everywhere, but so far too few countries have succeeded in eradicating some of the most glaring deficiencies.

(1) At least, of those of the Education ministries. It might be a direct sequel of other type of Government rules, especially those regulating spending: cumbersome public-offer procedures, pre-inflation spending limits for individual schools, and so on.

3. The 'nuclear' organization

A very promising line of reform which should greatly help to overcome the deficiencies we have just analyzed is that of the reorganization of the education network according to the concept of "nuclei". This has been undertaken in a variety of ways in more than half the countries of Latin America.

Stripped of the particular characteristics given to it in any one country, the 'nuclear' concept involves in all cases the grouping of a number of educational centres to form a collective unit able to offer better and more complete educational services to the community. But the realization of this general idea takes considerably different forms and pursues different sets of goals in each case (1).

In its most elementary form, the nucleus has been conceived as the linking of several incomplete rural schools around a complete one, so that the pupils from the former can attend the latter during the final years of their primary schooling. This type of nucleus, first established in Bolivia many years ago (1931), applies exclusively to rural areas with dispersed populations. In fact the Indian population was the target of the reform in Bolivia as well as in Peru (in the 1940's) and Guatemala (in the 50's). In all these cases, the new school organization was seen as a way of involving the community in its own development. Later, Guatemala carried this simple scheme one step forward with the "PEMEP" project (1970) (2). Each central school (four to begin with) was especially built in a 'finca' (state) for agricultural training purposes. Each had only four satellite schools, located at short distances. The teachers received special training. After 4 years' experience, a completely new curriculum was produced, with the teachers' participation, for rural primary education. But political circumstances limited this experience to about two dozen schools in just one part of the country. With less resources, the Rural School Nuclei of Colombia have followed the same line of development,

(1) - UNESCO Regional Office for Education, Santiago (Chile): "General Frame of Reference for the Discussions"; Meeting on the implementation of recommendations of the 1971 Conference of Ministers; Panama, February 1976.
- G. Tamayo Pena: "La nuclearizacion educativa: reflexiones sobre las experiencias de Colombia, Guatemala y Peru"; UNESCO, Guatemala, 1976.
- J. Bizot: "La reforma de la educacion en Peru"; I.B.E.-UNESCO, Paris, 1976.

(2) "Programa de Extension y Mejoramiento de la Educacion Primaria rural"; it is assisted by A.I.D. and was the object of an I.D.B. loan.

accentuating vocational training aspects.

A type of nucleus which is one degree more ambitious is that which groups several primary schools around a secondary-level institution in order to ensure the flow of students between the two levels. This was done in Brazil, under the name of "Fundamental education integrated units", with the aim of providing eight years of schooling to children in the area.

Considerably more innovative but also more difficult to carry out, is the idea of embracing within the rural nuclei both school and out-of-school educational activities - an idea that has become a component of most of the new types of nucleus we will describe in a moment. Of course, administratively this requires changing a lot of rules so as to permit better use of physical and human resources (premises and teachers), and to foster coordination at local level with other official agencies engaged in some sort of adult education - not an easy task by any means, especially in a centralised context.

The Costa Rican conception of rural school nuclei incorporates this idea of comprehensive community education, but in its first phase (now being applied in 4 of the 16 educational regions) it concentrates on the grouping of formal education centres: usually 5 or 6 complete schools (incomplete ones are very few) around a larger one. When it is possible - in a minority of cases - schools are grouped around a 'third cycle' agricultural institution (first cycle of secondary level, officially incorporated in the General Basic Education which is now compulsory). Given their small size, the nuclei constitute sub-divisions of the school district and come under the authority of the district supervisor. The director of the central school has a coordinating role, but no authority over the other schools. All the headmasters together, and perhaps all teachers, make up the rather informal committee in charge of developing the nucleus. The main idea is to bring rural schools up to the level of urban ones by providing various services which are out of reach of individual schools and encourage exchange of experience among teachers. The participation of other government agencies at the local level is included in the scheme, but it has not been particularly effective so far.

However, such participation is one of the central points of two other recent experiences: Colombia's "Rural Development Concentrations", and Guatemala's "Educational Nuclei for Development" (NEPADE), both started

in 1973 (1). The general features of both programmes are alike: they intend to offer a full basic education course of 9 years, but for the time being both emphasize the first few years. Both are heavily oriented to vocational training, which must be really productive in the last three years. Both are locally directed through Development Committees which include representatives of the community and delegates of other Governmental development agencies. The main difference is that in Colombia these concentrations are isolated from each other in different parts of this vast country, whereas in Guatemala the NEPADE covers two adjoining Departments of one single region, with the intention of gradually covering all rural areas, or at least those peopled by Indians (60% of the total population). Thus, Colombia has had to create in the Ministry of Education a new General Directorate for the Rural Concentrations programme, which deals directly with each nucleus; whereas Guatemala entrusts the programme's overall direction to the already existing General Directorate of Socio-Educational Rural Development (2), but confides the immediate direction of operations in the field to one supervisor per nucleus (about 20 so far) and to one Regional Supervisor, who also is supported by a Regional Development Committee. On the basis of this stimulating experience, Guatemala has embarked on yet another and more ambitious project, covering the Altiplano region. Its pedagogical system makes use of the "module" concept.

Of course the most developed nuclear organization is that of Peru, on which quite a bibliography already exists. It has two main differences from the previous schemes. As concerns educational administration, the Peruvian model not only embraces all forms and levels of education in the corresponding area, but has given the local authority ('Communal Education Council') and the Director of the nucleus (appointed by the Ministry) uncommonly large powers, to the extent that the Council proposes a list of candidates for Director to the Ministry - an unheard of intervention of

(1) It is the third attempt of this kind in Guatemala, each one more ambitious than the former. But this is also the country with the greatest Indian population in proportion to its size.

(2) Guatemala has a General Directorate for Primary (urban) education, and another, as noted above, for the rural areas. This goes against the general trend elsewhere (as one of the tenets of democracy) to make no distinctions, but in the particular conditions of the country, only a special effort under a special authority can bring a measure of democratization to rural students.

the community in such matters. In other words, decentralization has been carried much farther than in any other experience - with the proviso that 40 per cent of the said Communal Council is made up of the teachers themselves, i.e. by officers of the Ministry. The other distinctive point is the political scope of the whole scheme: participation in the local Councils by both the community and the other development agencies makes the educational programme the centre of the overall drive for development and for dissemination of the development philosophy of the Government.

Finally, Panama's 'Integrated Educational Development Programme has also started nuclearization of schools in the poorest areas with some special features of its own. These are the so-called 'Production Schools'. They share with other programmes such aspects as the gradual expansion of opportunities to nine-year school education, the integration of literacy and other adult programmes and the participation of the community. But they are distinctive in that they attempt to physically create the community, by making the 'production' school a magnet around which the previously isolated peasants come to build their dwellings. This is an extremely unusual feature which is made possible because of the very practical 'production' activities of the school, with both teachers and students carrying out such activities part-time. The school is thus able effectively to help the peasants to improve their production and their living standards, and to graft educational programmes for youths and adults onto this powerful motivation. The weak point of the programme so far is the difficulty to find and properly train the special sort of teachers required for successful implementation. Thus, after a strong initial drive, the extension of the programme is proceeding rather slowly.

Other countries of the region (Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela) also have some sort of nuclear organizations, more or less similar to the first types described above, but none of these programmes enjoys a high priority within the educational planning of these countries.

The 'nuclear' idea, apparently a distinctive Latin American innovation, is too recent (in its developed forms) to be properly evaluated yet. It seems however that it carries the seeds of far-reaching administrative reforms, providing a practical way to realise much-discussed concepts like decentralization, democratization and participation. It is still an open question whether this movement will succeed in breaking the time-honoured

practices of an authoritarian, over-centralized administration, or whether it will be slowly devitalised and smothered.

4. The inspectorate as a critical level

(a) The inspector as middleman

From the moment educational systems began to exist as such, inspectors or supervisors have been an essential part of them. More than that: they brought the system into existence, insofar as before there were only independent teachers or schools and perhaps somebody in the Government worrying about education, but nothing was done to link the schools in a common, national action until the inspectorate was formed. The inspector's role was the critical element of the system. It continues to be so, of course. However, the ideas, purposes and conditions of organized education have changed to such a degree that the role of the inspectorate, from being 'critical' for the remainder of the system, has entered a crisis of its own. In examining this situation, we will momentarily leave aside, for clarity's sake, the many levels and forms of supervision in modern systems, to concentrate only on the district inspector or supervisor - the origin of the inspectorate.

The inspector's role in an educational system can in fact be analyzed according to several basic models of different theories of administration: three of them will be the object of our attention. In organizational theory, between the highest or central level which bears responsibility for the whole system, and those working in the individual basic units of the system, there is need for one or several intermediate levels of office to see that the higher decisions are implemented, and exert control over the lower levels. In education, the inspector was for long the only intermediate level in this sense, exercising authority of the basic units (the schools) by delegation from the top (the Minister, the Director-General ... or the Chief Inspector). We shall see later how this has changed.

In the communication theory, there has to be a transmission apparatus between the sender of the message and its recipient, i.e. the inspector, in this case. But, as this theory, when applied to a system, implies two-way communication (the 'top' and the 'bottom' of the system alternately being senders and recipients), the inspector has really to play a double role, psychologically very different from the traditional one which only demanded from him one-way action - from top to bottom. His pre-

conditioning makes him nervous, within basically authoritarian organizations, to send messages upwards that may not be very welcome. He is then tempted to soften the gravity of the news, which explains why so many central offices do not really know what is happening in the field. The feedback they need to manage the system correctly is simply not forthcoming (1).

Finally, the modern theory of decision-making, viewed as the core of the administration, requires that between the political and the central programme decisions on the one hand, and the small decisions taken throughout the field worker's everyday tasks on the other, there should be an intermediate level where the major decisions are broken down into manageable activities and distributed for implementation according to capabilities. This more responsible role was certainly not expected from inspectors originally. Centrally-made decisions were supposed to be immediately carried out by schools and teachers, so that the only decisions made by inspectors were whether or not to impose sanctions on those failing in their duties. Later, however, with the growing trend towards democracy and participation, and with a fuller realisation of the complexities of educational processes, some latitude had to be given to inspectors to make secondary decisions. This begins to complicate communications theory, as the inspectors - the transmission mechanism - now modify the message. It also complicates organizational principles, for the middleman cannot now just rely on invoking higher authority to enforce his orders and directions since these are now, up to a point, his decisions. He must back them with his authority, which is less and less accepted by field workers as equivalent to his legal power: an important point which will later be enlarged upon.

This rapid glance at the role of the inspector in the educational administrative system according to theory already shows quite a few complexities; analysis of the practical aspects of his job in the Latin American context will identify many more. Let us add here that the divergent points of view indicated above, have nevertheless a point in common: the inspector or supervisor is in every case a middleman, an intermediary, with no real authority of his own. He acts by delegation from above, he is charged with representation from below. He finds himself in the uncomfortable position of one who neither manages the system nor engages in

(1) Cf. Previous remarks about the necessity for Ministry officers to have direct systematic contacts with the field (Ch. II, p. 48).

professional work with the 'clients'. It may well be that this indecisive position lies at the root of many practical shortcomings.

(b) The nature of the inspectorate in Latin America

The inspectorate in Latin American education systems was of course not established according to any sophisticated theory. It was, as in the European models, a simple common-sense application of what was later known as organizational studies. The inspectors were and are intended to fill, in a top-to-bottom direction, the role of communicators, disseminators and controllers of implementations of governmental decisions; in the reverse direction they are expected to report on developments in the field. Most of these functions were particularly important in an ag when the postal services were very weak and telecommunications simply did not exist. Nowadays, apart from cases where this situation has not changed that much, it is strange to observe that the educational system is often the last of the Government departments to make use of modern media - as if reliance on the old inspectorate arrangements had given the authorities an excuse for not bothering to provide the school system with costly modern technology. It is still a very common occurrence that distant, isolated schools remain out of touch with official decisions and directions for long periods simply because the inspector has not had the time nor the means to visit them, when a simple battery-powered transceiver could do the job. As for the dissemination role, an important structural innovation has considerably changed the situation, i.e. the establishment of regional offices.

We have already commented on the nature of the regional and sub-regional sub-divisions of educational administration. Another remark deserves consideration at this point. Whereas the setting up of the regions was first prompted by purely quantitative considerations (as central offices could not deal directly with hundreds of districts), the present-day trend based on geographical, economic and cultural differences, has been more decisive as regards the form that the administrative offices have taken and has at least led to assignment of a larger staff and some formal degree of autonomy to these offices. For the supervisors, this means that they now have another hierarchical step above them, and that they no longer have free access to the top authorities; in other words, their status, in the eyes of teachers, headmasters and the community, has suffered a definite erosion. Worse still, in some cases the district supervisors of a region

have been recalled to the regional offices to constitute the staff of the regional director. Though theoretically they may appreciate the virtues of team-work, there remains a feeling of lost of independence and a temptation not to take any personal initiative. It is true that they were supposed to have no authority of their own, but to be only delegates of the 'real' authorities. Thus really they had no proper premises, no auxiliary staff, no equipment - not even a typewriter, which often had to be borrowed from one of the schools. Nevertheless, they were 'somebody', respected by the community, perhaps feared by the teachers: the new situation leaves them with all their former duties, but with a diminished status.

Nevertheless, in accordance with the present conception of permanent pedagogical reform, supervisors are asked to carry out an additional, quite different function as 'technical advisers' to teachers and headmasters. A concern for the teachers' pedagogical performance had of course always been part of their duties - for some of them, the most important part. But it was no more than 'commonsense-plus-experience' counselling, often done in a rather desultory way in their sporadic visits to schools. Now it is a question of advising on new learning theories, new technologies and modern views of the social role of education: the nature of the job has become quite different.

Before dealing with this question, let us examine another case in point, which will illustrate a quite different set of problems: that is, the secondary-level inspectors or supervisors. We have already alluded to the fact that in almost all countries, primary and secondary schools are for all practical purposes two different systems. In the former, one teacher per classroom can give some unity to the different subjects and concentrate on the pupil's problems, whereas in the latter the curriculum is merely a sum of disciplines each taught by a different teacher, and nobody in the teaching staff cares for the pupils as individual persons (1). This difference is crucial for supervision. At the primary level, the inspector is basically a generalist, interested first in the organizational and administrative aspects of the school and secondly in teaching itself - and

(1) That is why many systems in the region have had to create a separate group of professionals for secondary schools: the psychological and vocational counsellors ('orientadores'). They are of course needed, but their work is too isolated and they are an alibi for other teachers evading counselling functions.

within this, more in methodology than in actual content. But the secondary school inspector is first and foremost a specialist in the teaching of one discipline, and his concern is to show that he knows more about it than the teachers he is supervising. The overall organization of the school is not his concern: he does not mind if the students have to deal with a dozen different sets of requirements, one from each teacher, if the teachers of different disciplines do not communicate except on the most superficial level, or if the dreary routine of classes, tests and examinations is not relieved by at least some interesting extra-curricular activities - not to speak of the social relevance of what is being taught. All this is outside his scope - and it is not his fault! If primary school inspection is usually no worse than innocuous, secondary inspection is often positively damaging, for it reverses all the priorities explicitly stated in laws and plans (1).

This fundamental deficiency is compounded by the fact that in most cases, secondary school inspectors are located in the capital, or at least in the large urban centres where the regional offices are established, since such schools are not so numerous as to justify a wider deployment of inspectors. This means that they are, or they become in time, fundamentally city-minded, and out of touch with the needs and expectations of rural and semi-rural populations. Whatever their political leanings - and in Latin America they are usually more to the left than most other professional groups - their professional vision is restricted to a narrow field. Educational planners and open-minded administrators, of whom there are fortunately quite a few, find the utmost difficulty in widening the views of such specialists so that they cooperate in reform programmes of a more comprehensive nature. It must be emphasized that this regrettable situation is not the personal fault of the supervisors, but of the obsolete supervising arrangements and of the whole old-fashioned conception of secondary education.

(1) In some countries, like Argentina, there exists a number of 'zonal' secondary inspectors, in charge of supervising the general administration of the schools. But they do not seem to have made a very great impact on this problem.

It is clear from these two examples (1) that it is the very nature of field-level supervision which is in question today. The administrative organization automatically makes use of intermediate posts, inherited from another era, and tries to fit into them every conceivable intermediate function - paperwork, transmission of directives, two-way communication of ideas, disciplinary control, ad-hoc pedagogic counselling, organization of community cooperation: in fact, all that covered by dozens of departments of the Ministry. The resulting accumulation of duties in a single post is simply appalling. In fact, priority is given in each case to one or another of the main functions according to different circumstances, i.e. the school level or stream, the original training of the inspector, the physical means at his disposal, pedagogic ideas of the moment, and of course the personal preferences of the inspector himself.

No thought has really been given to establishing the conceptual and professional 'centre of gravity' of these functions. If this were done, it would probably be found that no satisfactory unity is possible among the profusion of tasks, and that each function or group of functions should be entrusted to different officers occupying different posts. In central offices, and sometimes in the regional ones as well, it became clear at some point that 'line' and 'staff' functions had to be distinguished, and reflected in different departments: how can it be expected that at field level both types of functions can still be done, not merely from the same office, but by the same individuals? This basic problem has begun to receive proper attention in a few cases. The best example is Peru, where special technico-pedagogic adviser posts have been created at the levels of regions, zones and nuclei. The specialization of these advisers has perhaps been carried too far for a first attempt, and the system runs the risk of becoming too heavy and too costly, but it represents a big step in the right direction. Venezuela has also made a first move by establishing at the district level 'maestras asesoras' (teaching advisers) for rural groups and for the first two grades of urban schools (2); this is working well, and may be the beginning of a more comprehensive scheme. Costa Rica, on

(1) The same is true, with minor modifications, of the other levels of inspection placed sometimes above district level, i.e. zone and regional inspectors, inspectors-general, Chief Inspector.

(2) Cf. Lyons and Pritchard, "Primary school inspection: a supporting service for education", I.I.E.P., 1976, p. 116.

the other hand, tried in 1972 to convert its district supervisors into a team of regional advisers, transferring most paperwork to a regional administrative officer, but the supervisors resisted the change for fear of losing 'authority', and because they did not feel up to the task, academically speaking. Interestingly enough, after receiving some systematic training at University level, a number of them are now seeking a change in this line. However, most countries are still struggling with the impossible task of making the old inspectorate system cope with the present demands of development-oriented education.

(c) The selection of the staff

District supervisors are normally chosen from among qualified teachers who can fulfil some additional conditions: they must have reached a certain seniority (usually 10 to 15 years as a minimum); in most countries, they must have been headmasters for some time; their files must show a number of 'points' accumulated through further studies, seminars and congresses, publications, prizes or distinctions, and so on (1). Seniority is in fact the major criterion, as it counts for the largest number of points. In some cases, once the list of best-placed candidates has been drawn, the final selection is made by competitive examination ("concurso de oposicion"). Candidacies for vacant posts can either be submitted by teachers from all parts of the country, or be restricted to the particular area or region.

This type of regulation is quite common on the Latin American continent and represents a vast improvement on the arbitrary ways of previous times. Nevertheless, the resulting system is open to criticism, whether from the point of view of administrative efficiency or of democratic principles.

In the first place, the restriction of candidacies - usual in large countries - to teachers from the particular region where the vacancy exists, results sometimes in perpetuating unjustifiable differences in the level of efficiency of the inspectorate. According to the degree of educational development in different regions, the same qualifications that put a candidate at the top of the list in Region A would not earn a second

(1) Of course, political interference too often nullifies the statutory rules, especially during 'revolutionary' periods, but we cannot here deal with such situations.

glance in Region B. Local teachers may be satisfied with their possibilities of advancement (and that is why the restriction exists), but the system as such cannot raise the level of effectiveness.

More generally, two essential conditions for good performance of supervisory duties are always missing from the criteria used: specific administrative training and personal leadership qualities. As for the former, it is rather intriguing to see that, while the necessity of such training is highly proclaimed and has led to complicated arrangements for holding supervisors' in-service courses, nowhere has previous training been made a condition for applications for posts so that the problem becomes self-perpetuating. As for the second criterion, no 'scientific' method has yet been found or accepted in Latin America for evaluating the leadership potential of candidates to posts of command. The annual 'grading' of individual teachers' performance that finds its way to the Personnel Department's files in most countries, takes no account of such qualities. Indeed, valid assessments on this point could very well be requested from people who have worked with the candidates, but obviously, for such assessments to be properly used, they would have to be submitted anonymously and by all the people concerned - i.e. through some sort of electoral procedures. And to this, the 'military-industrial' model on which the systems were originally established is inherently opposed.

These two deficiencies represent a very serious handicap for securing a good level of effectiveness from the supervisory body - even supposing that supervision could be restructured as suggested in the previous section. Another fault, understandable in authoritarian regimes but quite at odds with democratic leanings of other governments, is attributable to the whole selection process. The 'administered' do not participate at all in the appointment of their administrators. Assuming that the selection criteria as reflected in individual files were correct, and that the final contest among the best-qualified candidates worked without a hitch, this would still be a purely technocratic process, quite acceptable for selecting technicians (or 'staff' administrators), but not for choosing incumbents to command posts (or 'line' administrators - including inspectors). Mutatis mutandis, this amounts to the abuse 'taxation without representation'

that started the American revolution ...(1)

Incidentally, there exists in several countries an abnormal situation which cannot be explained by the current selection system, i.e. the average district inspector is professionally less qualified than the average teacher. This is confessed by the authorities. This anomaly seems to be due to the very rapid expansion of elementary education in a relatively recent period (mainly, the Latin American 'Major Project' of 1956-66). In those years, the sudden need to create a good many supervisory posts compelled the Ministries to appoint as inspectors, teachers or headmasters of some experience and reliability, but with low academic qualifications. Fifteen years later, they are still on the job. Meanwhile, a new generation of teachers benefited from better training, and even the older teachers often received systematic re-training, but similar actions in favour of supervisors were few and far between (see Ch. II). This irregular situation might be regarded as an historical accident, which had unfortunate consequences for some development plans, but whose effects will fade in time. However, the general problem of inadequate preparation for inspection duties, perpetuated by the absence of poor training requirements for new inspectors, is a far more serious matter. Let us consider this aspect of the question.

Within the educational system, teachers are clearly-defined professionals, specifically trained for the job they are doing. Headmasters, although often untrained for the administrative side of their job, at least hold quite well-defined positions, and work in daily contact with children - which was after all the main point of their training. On the other hand, supervisors are assigned a large group of tasks, vitally important from the point of view of the system, but for which it is no longer possible to establish a unified profile. Their status, as we have seen, tends to diminish; they are kept apart from the specific job they were trained to do, i.e. teaching; and they were never properly trained for either their complex administrative duties or the new kind of pedagogic counselling that is now asked of them. How can they feel and act as professionals doing a

(1) In Argentina, however, all promotions, from Principals upwards, are made by a combination of 'points' and a competitive examination, under the supervision of 'Juntas de clasificacion' (Qualification Boards) where elected representatives of the teachers hold a majority over Government delegates. Some of the jury members are also elected by those who are to sit for the exam.

specific job? They are not supervisory professionals - if such a profession exists. They are only officers ('funcionarios') of the system, and lesser ones at that.

Thus, they cannot honestly be expected to bring to their disconcerting mixture of duties the kind of dedication, nor show in them the kind of effectiveness, that educational reform plans need at this critical stage in order to reach classrooms in full strength. The answer, moreover, does not lie merely in more training, even if conceived as a thorough professional 'recycling', because to devise such training, the nature of the 'profession' needs to be clarified first. This involves, as previously stated, transforming intermediate-level structures to remove the constraints that at present negate the efforts of even the best-trained inspectors.

A last problem concerning the inspection staff (but indeed, a common problem of all categories in the chain of command) is the indeterminate duration of tenure. In practically all legislations, once somebody has reached a post of inspector (or of headmaster, departmental director, etc.) by normal means, he will never be made to return to a lesser post, unless by demotion following the committing of a serious fault (1). Thus, leaving aside the very few cases of promotion to the narrow top of the administrative pyramid, the highest post a significant number of teachers can hope to reach is that of inspector - and once there, they will remain in place for the rest of their active life (2). A number of undesirable effects follow from this fact, both for the system as such and for the inspectors themselves:

- There is little transfusion of 'fresh blood' into the management body; the same people remain in charge year after year while the world around them changes rapidly.

- Young teachers, especially when fresh from the University, arrive in schools full of new ideas, which cannot be properly 'adjusted' to realities when headmasters and supervisors are too out of touch for real

(1) Something that never happens except in political upheavals. Effective disciplinary measures for educational officers are the most difficult thing in the world. At most, the inefficient are kicked sideways to go on being inefficient in a similar post elsewhere ...

(2) Except in older systems like those of the southernmost countries, inspectors are appointed at a comparatively early age (between 35 and 40). They will therefore remain on the job for 20 years or more. Annual turnover should be around 4-5 per cent; in fact, in recently expanded systems, it is scarcely over 2 per cent.

dialogue to take place.

- Fruitful cooperation between theory and experience is then replaced by more or less polite hostility; the 'counselling' efforts of inspectors become useless.

- Every administration needs 'new brooms' for periodical, thorough spring-cleaning. Otherwise defects take root and become too difficult and costly to eradicate.

- Long exercise of authority removed from the actual teaching situation tends to make inspectors forget their own experience; their judgments tend to be more abstract and remote from real conditions, thus undermining their credibility.

- As inspectors age, the continuous travelling required for effective supervision becomes too tiresome; school visits are reduced as much as possible.

- Finally, to make the list as short as possible, the most common complaint is about the authoritarianism that creeps in; old inspectors are less and less inclined to listen either to the teachers or to the higher authorities.

Indeterminate tenure is really only suitable to military or corporate hierarchies (where there are many more levels of hierarchy to mount), but not to the academic world. As school systems are staffed more and more by professionals with University training, it would be normal that command posts should periodically rotate. Interest in professional activities (teaching, counselling) should normally be stronger than in holding posts of command involving a large proportion of administrative routine. A return to teaching should involve no loss of status, as is the case for deans or presidents of Universities who go back to teaching and research. It is a question of value-oriented attitudes: and the upgrading of primary and secondary teaching staff is already pointing in this direction.

One final point could usefully be added here: almost inevitably, the level of effectiveness in holding a given post follows a curve very similar to the Gauss 'bell' in statistics. A certain initial period is necessary to fully master the situation; there follows a period, usually of a few years, of optimum productivity, and then decline in effectiveness sets in. Managers should be replaced as soon as the decline begins but, at least in education, they could regain effectiveness in a new position. The main

obstacle to establishing fixed, non-renewable periods for holding positions in the educational chain of command is of course the present structure of salaries. Although this is not the place to discuss this complex matter, perhaps the problem is not so insoluble as it seems to many people. The main thing would be to peg salary scales to professional, as opposed to administrative, categories. It is the quality of duties, not their kind (teaching or administration), which should form the basis for pay. It could even be argued that teachers should be paid more than inspectors or administrators, since it is they who go about the real business of educating youth....

(d) The inspectors' work

How does the average district inspector cope with the amazing variety of tasks he is supposed to perform? To begin with, practically all regulations direct him to divide his weekly or monthly schedule in such a way that no more of a fraction (25 - 40 per cent) of his time is devoted to "administrative" tasks, i.e. office work; all the rest should be employed in pedagogic matters, mostly in the schools themselves. This limitation on the time to be spent on administration is illusory in most cases, given the amount of paperwork required for collecting and transmitting statistics, filling out personnel forms, checking inventories, organizing book distribution, verifying expenditures, solving conflicts ... and drafting reports (1). Besides, customarily a number of other duties are also expected from him, and any new national programme is apt to add specific tasks to his burden (2).

In fact, since the inspector is the only physical link with schools (for modern communications, as we have seen, are sparingly used), every kind of administrative flow between the schools and the centre has to be routed through the district inspector's office, however poor it may be. Moreover, due to lack of training in strictly administrative techniques, this bureaucratic work takes up much longer than it should, and is often

(1) The Venezuelan regulations, for instance, require from the inspectors six kinds of regular reports, as well as considered opinions on every school's report, studies on quantitative and geographical needs, 'investigations' of physical facilities, etc. See R. Lyons and M. Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 122 ff.

(2) The most recent of these programmes in several countries has been that of school meals, calling for a quite different set of administrative abilities.

unsatisfactory regarding both accuracy and promptness. The situation is improving slightly where the regional organization has been able to provide some supporting services to the inspectors.

But a supervisor's main duties are supposed to be those dealing with specifically educational matters. In order to carry them out, either the supervisor goes to the teachers (school visits) or they come to him (concentrations). The school visit has always been seen as the core of supervisory functions. The visits may or may not follow an annual plan, and may or may not be made (most often they are not) with the help of a handbook or guide of inspection (which, when it does exist, is little more than a checklist of material facts as found in the regulations). But the first problem which acts as a condition for all the rest, is one of <u>time.</u> With a school year rarely exceeding 180 effective workdays (half-days, usually), and after deducing 40 per cent of this time for office work, there remain only about 100 days for visiting schools - a little over 3 days per school in an average "district" of about 30 schools. If the most usually recommended pattern of visiting schools is followed (three visits per year, at the beginning, the middle and the end), this means one-day visits - i.e. little more than four hours in which the inspector is supposed to check on dozens of points and to counsel headmaster and teachers after having observed them at their work... The frequently-followed alternative is, of course, <u>not</u> to visit every school every year, or only once a year. As a result, the supervisor has quite a clear idea of each school's 'external' features, but knows very little of what really happens in regard to educational quality. Practically no country is free of the general complaint by teachers working in isolated schools that they have not seen the supervisor for years - at least, not in the school itself.

It must be said that material conditions in rural areas do not make it any easier for the inspector to carry out his round of visits. The quality of the road system varies widely, but in every country there are still very difficult areas with schools that cannot be reached except on horseback, or by canoe - or not at all in some seasons. The average rural area demands a motor vehicle, often of the double-traction type and reasonable supplies of gasoline, plus an effective maintenance system. The almost universal lack of this facility obliges inspectors to use public transport services with consequent loss of precious time. The other big prob-

lem in this respect is the provision of daily allowances for bed and board. In most cases, these allowances are calculated at ridiculously low rates. This is sometimes the result of inflation, but generally speaking, the rates are calculated at most to cover the barest necessities of, say, a driver, whereas the inspector has to keep a certain standard of living for elementary reasons of dignity and prestige. Where inspectors have succeeded in having their travel allowances added to their salary, so as not to have to wait several months before being reimbursed, they have used any slight reason for not making as many monthly visits as they should, so that the overall allowance is distributed among a lesser number of visits. This way they are not penalized for doing their duty - but their duty is not fully done.

But let us suppose that the inspector has reached the school, and that he has been able to schedule a two- or three-day visit. The usual situation is that he devotes more time to administrative than to pedagogic aspects, and within the latter, more to routine checking than to creative counselling. This is not difficult to understand. First, it is obvious that the shortness of time compels him to give priority to urgent over important matters: to teacher absenteeism, let us say, over the same teacher's methodology, or to the keeping of pupils' files over research about unsatisfactory school attendance. It could be said also that nobody has taught him how to supervise the performance of the school as a whole and the work of the teachers within this context, so that observations will naturally be directed to some specific points of regulations, rather than to the overall educational impact of the school on students, individually and collectively.

Frequently, however, there is a deeper reason for the disinclination of the inspector to delve into substantive educational problems on his visits to schools or for the small effect of his guidance in these matters when he does take them up: he lacks authority. However, he does not lack power. Although more carefully regulated than in former times, the inspector's potential influence over the careers of teachers and headmasters is still rather large. But the kind of professional authority that is required for giving useful guidance is different. In a good number of cases, as we have seen, the junior personnel is better prepared, academically speaking, than the supervisor. The latter may have more experience, but if

unsupported by a certain level of learning, it will not be heeded by teachers fresh from higher training. Either the inspector knows this, and refrains from counselling,or his counsels are given no more than a polite hearing. In a not insignificant number of cases, however, the supervisor has both the learning and the experience, but his ambivalent role prevents his technical advice from being effective. For any counselling to be effective, the relationship between the giver and the receiver of guidance must be one of frank, mutual trust and of a certain equality in human terms. But the teacher cannot see the supervisor in this light, since he is the same person who wields power over his career. To the ordinary teacher, complete frankness is out of the question - his difficulties could be used against him. Thus, in the end, we return to the problem of the dual role of supervisors: should they be inspectors in the traditional sense, or counsellors ('asesores') as a widespread change of terminology would have us believe? The two cannot go together. The authoritarian inspector will never generate the confidence required for real counselling; a paternal inspector might, but then he could have difficulties in exercising discipline. The failure of the inspectors' pedagogic role is an intrinsic part of the system (1).

Fortunately, there exists a second method for the supervisor to discharge his technico-pedagogical functions; a method that is becoming increasingly common, and encourages better attitudes on both sides. I refer to meetings, or 'concentrations', of a school district's teachers and headmasters, conducted by the supervisor. These can take different forms: all teachers and headmasters together, or the latter only; the personnel of the whole district, or of one particular area; just for one day or half day, or for a longer session; made only on special occasions, or regularly (2).

The practice of holding such meetings was begun in most cases on the initiative of the Ministries. When permenent technico-pedagogic units

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(1) For a few happy exceptions to this rule, see what has been written above about Peru and Venezuela (Ch. III, p.).

(2) If the latter, the supervisor often chooses pay day, in the many countries where the teachers still have to go to a centrally-located school in order to receive their monthly paycheck. This anachronistic practice, which chooses to ignore the banking system, involves the loss of one or two workdays every month for some teachers.

were created, it soon became apparent that the only way to reach all or a majority of teachers was to hold gatherings in different parts of the country. Regional offices, as far as they were given some substantial work to do, took the same course of action. Since the administrative unit chosen for such meetings was usually the school district (or two or three of them together), personnel at district level began to appreciate the advantages of getting together for professional reasons from time to time. Official regulations were often established to sanction this practice, and supervisors soon found that such meetings could be more useful, at least for certain purposes, than repeated visits to individual schools.

In fact, 'concentrations' could never be a substitute for direct knowledge of each school in its geographical, social and cultural context; but they do help in accomplishing some of the goals that were previously to be attained from visits only. The main advantage is that in such meetings, the supervisor need not appear in his 'inspecting' role (there is no checking up that regulations are being followed), so that an atmosphere of relaxed professional friendship is comparatively easy to attain. Attention can then be concentrated on professional issues as such, without touching on individual schools' problems and conflicts. When the supervisor feels inadequately prepared, whether in general or to tackle a particular subject, he can always bring in some 'expert' from another area or ask some better-trained headmaster or teacher to conduct the discussion. A useful advantage is the possibility for teachers to experience new group-work methods and techniques, mainly on the lines of seminars and workshops. The most important overall effect is that the 'district' ceases to be an abstraction or an administrative device, and becomes a living community of educators dealing with the specific problems of a specific area.

However, as often happens with good things, these meetings are sometimes rendered useless by being taken as no more than a formula. When the supervisor himself has not attained a minimum awareness of real educational issues, and he holds meetings just because it is so ordered, he is most likely to use them as a device for simplifying his administrative duties and cutting down on his school visits; the sessions become a long series of recriminations and complaints and a good part of the time is spent in filling out forms or in checking statistics and other reports, etc. In other cases - with sometimes touching but ineffective goodwill - he delivers

some sort of lecture on a trivial subject which bores his audience and does no good at all. Whatever the subject, the authoritarian or paternalistic supervisor will permit no real dialogue or discussion on the matter in hand. In such cases, the teachers become convinced of the futility of such sessions: a useful tool is lost for progress, and the supervision has again failed to provide effective leadership.

However, with or without official backing, a variant of these meetings is gaining acceptance, i.e. regular working sessions of the supervisor with his district's headmasters. These are sometimes formally known as the 'Council of Directors' and can be perhaps the most useful contribution the supervisor can make to improving the quality of education in his district. Serious matters can be dealt with in a small group and it is unlikely that the participants, who have such personal responsibility, would allow their time to be wasted in the way we have just criticized. In fact, the benefits that these regular meetings can bring to the district are very similar to those outlined earlier in this paper in relation to the Minister's 'general staff' meetings (see Ch. II, pp.42-43).

As 'concentrations' of both kinds (teachers' gatherings and headmasters' council) become regular features, and to the extent that they fulfil a very useful purpose, these meetings can have an interesting 'fall-out' effect on the main activity of the supervisors, namely visits to schools. Such visits remain his most important duty, for nothing can be substituted for first-hand knowledge of every particular situation. Larger ideas dealt with in the meetings have to be adjusted to and checked against individual situations. But when, thanks to the meetings, genuinely professional relationships have been established between the supervisor and the rest of the personnel based on free discussion of pedagogic issues, attitudes of both sides during school visits cannot be the same as before. Concern over regulations tends to take second place to substantive matters. Moreover, 'concentrations' can be held perhaps half a dozen times a year or more, whereas it is unlikely that each school can be visited more than twice in the same period, especially in the rural areas.

All this, however, is not a panacea for the intrinsic ills of the inspection system as described earlier. The dual role of the supervisor will continue to cause problems and the unmanageable number and diversity of duties piled upon his shoulders will always severely limit, both

materially and psychologically, practical possibilities concerning the pedagogical side of this task, until such time as the system itself is radically changed.

(e) The inspectorate and planned reforms

The above description of the inspectorate as it functions in Latin America was made in a comparatively a-historical way, supposing as far as possible an average, ordinary situation. It is open to question whether 'ordinary' situations are to be found at all in today's educational systems: that is to say, whether there is in any country a situation where no special efforts are made, with planning as an instrument, to implement global or partial educational reforms.

Thus, we must now analyze the critical role played by the inspectorate when a national programme for educational development is begun. This can be done quite briefly, since the preceding analyses have already cleared the ground. Our remarks will be centred on four conditions which the inspectorate should obviously fulfil if it is to play a positive role in the process. Inspectors must be convinced of the excellence of the plan, or of the specific programmes requiring their cooperation; they must be professionally able to take up their role in the process; they must be organized for effective action; and they must be equipped with the necessary resources.

On the first point - and the most decisive - the attitude of the inspectorate towards educational plans has been in most cases rather lacking in enthusiasm. While in Ministerial offices there has always been at least a sizeable group fully committed to the plan, and teachers, students and parents usually had great expectations, the intermediate level represented by supervisors has often been, due to its lukewarm or even sceptical attitudes, a point at which proposed changes became bogged down and lost their edge.

It is by no means certain that such a regrettable attitude was due, as has been suggested sometimes, to the low academic level of many inspectors. Less-educated teachers, working in isolated outposts, have on many occasions been the most cooperative. More probably, the root of the matter must be sought in the absence of participation in the planning process. This lack of involvement in the decision-making process not only resulted in a feeling of indifference and detachment, but also provided a

means to justify indifference, since any plan drawn up at the centre inevitably contains provisions that do not tally with the real situation as seen from below. Inspectors often felt that they were asked to implement plans in which they had no part, and where a number of wrong or utopian proposals were to be found. Of course, special seminars and other activities were always undertaken by the Ministries to spread understanding of the plan and its programmes,but the impact of such activities after the event can seldom overcome the initial coolness.

We have already commented on the average professional abilities of supervisors. It would be unreasonable to expect that when a plan has to be implemented those abilities should suddenly increase: however, this seems to be the assumption in too many cases. If in 'normal' times an inspector is unable to organize his district's pedagogical activities, the timely distribution of books and materials, or the swift transmission of circulars, etc., these shortcomings will still be there and will probably worsen during plan implementation since a new plan usually involves some new tasks in addition to the customary ones. Each time a comprehensive educational plan has been initiated, special refresher courses have been organized for supervisors. In El Salvador (1970), the Minister simply took supervisors (half at a time) away from post for nearly a school year to have them retrained in a national centre. He considered that, since they were no good at their job, nothing much could happen if they were not there - and nothing much happened in fact. Other countries adopted less drastic measures using different combinations of part-time courses, short seminars and intensive vacation sessions. However, in most cases such actions were too short, too unsystematic, and lacked continuity. The supervisors' offices became a bottleneck in the implementation process. When there was a sufficient degree of enthusiasm, lots of additional, voluntary help could be summoned so as to overcome the inadequacies of administration at this level, but here we come up against the greatest failing in the inspectors' training: the lack of psycho-social abilities to arouse enthusiasm and make the best use of every one's special qualities (see above, p. 91).

As for organized action: except in cases (still a minority) where regular meetings have already led to some degree of inter-school organization, the inspectors usually work in isolation - a factor to which the system contributed. This applies also to the region: cases are still very

few where all the inspectors and other professional assistants to the Regional Director work as a team, discussing matters together, distributing tasks according to each person's particular abilities, and sharing overall responsibilities. If the series of inter-connected reforms usually incorporated in a plan is to reach individual schools in full force, the different responsibilities cannot all be assumed by each individual inspector for his own district; they will have to be distributed among the members of the inspectorate working as a team in the whole region, or perhaps in an area comprising several districts. This would not relieve each inspector of administrative responsibility for his own district, but guidance on different aspects of the reform would be in the hands of those most able to cope with each problem. Lack of team spirit is probably the single most important factor in the failure of qualitative reforms. The same is true inside each district, where headmasters and perhaps some experienced teachers could form a similar team. Unfortunately, the proverbial individualism of Latin peoples has so far been too difficult to overcome.

Finally, the question of <u>equipment and other resources</u> for plan implementation at district level could be considered the least of the problems, philosophically speaking, but its practical consequences can be truly devastating. We have suggested that the dearth of material resources allocated to most supervisors is a result of administrative tradition that considers them mere delegates of higher officers, like the "eyes and ears of the king", with no autonomous authority and consequently with no need for elaborate equipment. Present reality does not conform to tradition, as we have seen, but material destitution of inspectors' offices is still the rule rather than the exception, and in rural areas, it is generally aggravated by the surrounding poverty, which offers no possibility of compensatory resources. We shall not insist - for it is very obvious - on the fact that many provisions of a reform cannot be carried out without essential means of a physical nature - books, supplies, teaching materials, transportation, and so on. Let us instead emphasize the consequences of this penury of resources on the three conditions for success we have just analyzed.

For example, the reluctance of central authorities to provide the inspectors with the minimum facilities for carrying out their normal duties (premises, equipment, some secretarial services, a jeep ...) may logically

be taken as confirmation that their functions are not so important in the eyes of the authorities as the hierarchical structure would tend to suggest. The inspectors might well think that their role is not so important or they would not be so badly treated in each year's budget; "let them who have the means come and preach the reform to the teachers - we have already more to do than we can cope with." Indeed, for the inspectors, a convincing plan would be one that began by allocating the basic necessities to them. Otherwise they cannot be expected to have a very enthusiastic attitude.

Also, the inspectors' level of professional competence cannot greatly increase, either in theoretical tenets or technical skills, when they are not supplied with the instruments of learning: books, technical reviews and documents, modern didactic materials - things that most Latin American budgets neglect to a still greater degree than physical facilities. At a recent course on educational administration in a Central American university in a simulation exercise in programming at the end of the semester, a group of supervisors chose as its subject the installation (without Government support) of a small library and documentation centre for supervisors and teachers of two adjoining districts; an 'exercise' that they had decided to carry out in actual fact. They were acutely aware that what they had learned would be quickly forgotten if not sustained by constant reading and discussion. And this was a University credit course: what durable effects can be expected from customary lectures and seminars if these are not followed by a flow of intellectual resources? Unfortunately, even when there is a will, there is not always a way: as we remarked before, there is little in Spanish or Portuguese on the practical aspects of modern administration and planning of education.

Lastly, it is self-evident that lack of equipment and resources is a very serious drawback for any attempts on the part of supervisors to organize themselves and their districts for the purpose of implementing plans. The first need for organization of people dispersed over a large area is a means of communication. But if, especially in rural zones, they are denied not only vehicles but even the telephone in lots of cases - not to speak of things like radio in isolated outposts - how can they be expected to maintain a working organization? (1) Or, to give an example, from organization

(1) Also in a university course, another group of supervisors developed as an exercise the installation of radio communications in a distant area. Both topics came from the supervisor-students ' own initiatives; the professor was thinking of more homely problems.

at a higher level to reduce costs, the Ministry in a large country obliged its central inspectors to travel by train or bus when visiting faraway provinces. They thus wasted whole days (which had to be paid anyway) in travel which could have been done in a few hours, and in recovering from exhausting journeys. Of course, the money wasted on the extra days travel was hidden in the monthly payroll, whereas a voucher for an air ticket stands out very visibly ...

To sum up: the sheer lack of elementary equipment and material resources and the budgetary niggling about marginal expenditure on these matters, are fundamental reasons why the inspectorate, occupying a key position in the management of educational development, is at best unable to do very much to contribute to the process, and at worst acts an almost insurmountable barrier to the carrying out of ministerial instructions at the reality of the school level. One cannot but regret very deeply the short-sighted policies of Ministries of Education (or of Finance?) who on the pretext of administrative austerity undermines the work of the supervisors. The saving of small sums renders the enormous outlay of money allotted to the rest of the system unproductive, i.e. money cannot be efficiently used because inspectors are unable to provide the necessary management.

Conclusion

Clearly, too little attention has been paid to the inspectorate in recent studies on educational administration. Since this component of the managerial system has so far played a very minor role in the prevailing decision-making processes and since, on the other hand, it does not operate directly on the students who are the final object of the decisions, it has been thought that it can safely be given a lower place in the list of priorities of study and research.

How wrong this assumption is, becomes evident as soon as the actual flow of ideas, directives and activities within the school system is analyzed, even as rapidly as we have just done. Practically no decisions from the top can reach the operational stage. nor can the results of field operations be effectively fed back into the decision-making machinery, without passing through and being shaped by the supervisors. It can be asserted that neglect of this factor (not having the right men, in the right role, with the right organization and the right means of action) has been the most decisive single factor in the comparative failure of so many planning efforts in Latin American education.

V. CONCLUSIONS

1. What should be known

This too rapid survey of the functioning of Latin American educational administration when faced with the task of implementing planned development may have served at least to bring to light the extent of our ignorance of these matters.

Dozens of large and small factors affecting the usefulness of the administrative machinery for development purposes have been brought to light in these pages and can be used as elements or categories of analysis, but on very few of them were our remarks able to be more precise than saying, 'in many cases', 'it appears', 'usually', 'in several countries', 'the average situation', and the like. For the most part (again!) these factors can easily be measured, so that nothing except lack of attention should prevent our knowing the situation with precision. Administrators can be counted and distributed according to levels and specializations, their training can be shown by categories, the extent of powers and the volume of duties can be accurately expressed, the frequency of inspection visits can be established, and so on. Detailed reports of this type, however, are extremely rare. In addition, a few of these factors are much harder to assess, mainly those having to do with attitudes. Technical instruments of enquiry can of course be devised to this end, but the cost of such enquiries seems too high for Governments struggling to find enough for the most obvious necessities. This attitude is quite wrong, since a more accurate knowledge of what goes on in the minds of administrators would be very useful in order to improve the returns to educational expenditure - but the attitude is prevalent.

In any case, precise facts would not be very profitable by themselves. Much more important, but considerably more difficult to ascertain, are the systemic relationships of such facts and factors, their mutual impact, how the conditions of administrative careers affect attitudes towards change. Is the stability of senior staff an incentive to further training? What degree of decentralization is most likely to improve the inspectors' effectiveness? What is the effect of a given degree of grassroots participation on the technical quality of a plan? ... and so on and so forth. Research on these lines would of course face serious difficulties, as the situations in which such relationships become manifest cannot

be reproduced at will. It would have to be a sort of historical research, albeit of recent years. Moreover, this kind of research can easily become sidetracked, vainly trying to grasp impalpable relationships between almost unrelated factors. A clear systemic view of interactions is therefore necessary, based at the start on a combination of administrative theory and experience, but open to later modifications according to the results of the research itself. The accompanying diagram is a first attempt to draw such a 'map' for this kind of research. It includes all the main factors that have been identified in previous chapters and their most obvious relationships. Some of the items included are in their turn susceptible to further sub-division into secondary factors, whose relationships can also be investigated. As it stands, however, it may be useful as a beginning to the necessary studies which have so far been very much neglected.

Our first conclusion, then, is that systematic studies and research are necessary on the situation and the operational methods of Latin American educational administration:

- studies on manifest factors such as: administrative structures; staff recruitment, training, categories and career prospects; degree of centralization/decentralization; distribution and delegation of responsibilities; office procedures; composition of planning unit(s); flows of actions in the planning process; coordinating bodies and procedures; communication network; storing and retrieval of information; organization of logistic support; etc. These studies would have to compare legislation requirements and constraints with the actual situations and processes;

- research on the attitudes of the staff, by categories, towards educational and administrative change, in relation mainly to three other factors: political stability and commitment to change, career conditions, and participation in the process of plan preparation;

- investigation of the relevant interrelationships of all these factors from the point of view of their repercussions on goal attainment.

This research would have to analyze carefully the historical roots and socio-political context of both the factors and their interactions.

The expected results of such studies and research would be:

- to identify with the greatest possible precision the dysfunctions of educational administration systems from the perspective of their capacity for developmental action;

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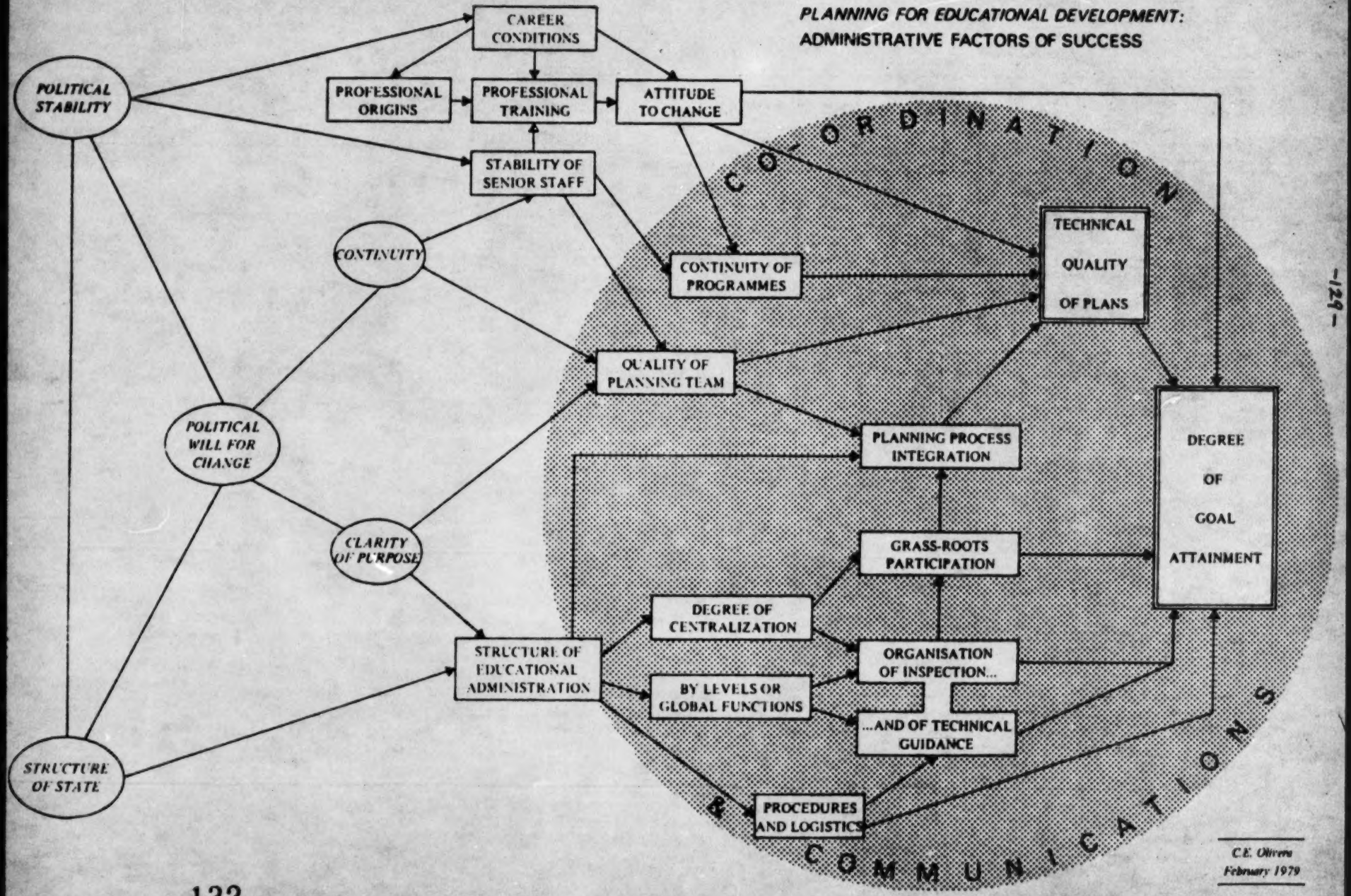

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- to point out the changes in legal texts, procedures and bureaucratic customs that should be made to correct the malfunctions; and

- to devise a strategy for putting such changes into practice, in connection with development programmes in a given country.

2. What can be asserted

Without waiting for the results of such detailed studies, a certain number of assertions can be made on the strength of what has been said in previous chapters, about the most common problems posed by educational administration for the effectiveness of development plans. While the extent of the validity of these assertions cannot be the same for every country in the region, they are all valid to some degree. Furthermore, they may be useful as an initial set of hypotheses for research. Statements can be very brief, since corresponding explanations have already been provided in the text. It will be seen that we are not drawing specific conclusions about the political context, because, from the point of view of all but the small top group of officials brought in by each Minister, politics are a fact - something the administrators can do nothing about. We should, however, remember that all too often, a good part of the blame usually directed at the administration for not getting results should really be directed at political factors, for example: lack of sustained commitment to change and progress or plain ignorance instead of clearsighted statesmanship, petty interference of specific interests with the straightforward implementation of carefully planned decisions, and so on. A strong and intelligent leadership can overcome many administrative deficiences and get results - the best administration cannot compensate for lack of leadership.

However, assuming that political leaders are really committed to educational development, they will find the usual type of administration is a very inadequate instrument. We can summarize our conclusions in this respect as follows:

On the structural and legal aspects

(a) The structure of educational administration is needlessly complicated and ultimately dysfunctional, mainly because of the confusing superposition of two opposing organizational criteria: division by level of schooling or by administrative functions covering all levels.

(b) There is a superabundance of rules and regulations, which were issued during different epochs; rarely is a clean sweep made to replace

them all by a simple body of consistent rules. Many of the regulations are based on obsolete laws which established a rigid educational framework quite alien to the modern need for development.

(c) A high degree of centralization is maintained, ostensibly to secure the unity of the educational system (and through it, national unity), which at the same time overlooks the divisive effect of uniform rules applied in different situations. Decentralized participation would instead allow formal diversities while creating a much stronger sense of fundamental unity.

(d) Initiative and creativity on the part of teachers and lower-level officials are discouraged by centralization, thus depriving the system as a whole of energies which could enrich the educational reform movement and keep it alive.

(e) At certain points of the hierarchy (1), effective management is rendered virtually impossible by the sheer numbers of direct subordinates. No real guidance and control is possible when a senior official has to deal directly with fifteen or twenty heads of offices with different problems. There should be a rule limiting direct subordinates to about a dozen and reorganizing the lines of command accordingly.

(f) There is still a strong tendency among educational administrators to shun contacts with other Government departments and agencies and with the public, to isolate themselves from the field, maintain only formal contacts in writing with local officers and teachers; and to avoid contacts with other professionals or sectors of public life which would bring different (and refreshing) points of view to educational matters. The tendency, in several countries, to constitute regional and local Development Councils so as to integrate education with other activities has not yet made very much impact.

(g) The combination of centralization, too many rules, and bureaucratic isolation, results in a great deal of red tape which gives administrators the impression of being very useful because they are very busy, while in fact their activities make little or no contribution to the development of education.

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(1) Principally the Minister himself, or his second-in-command, the Inspector-General (or whatever officer acts as direct chief of territorial divisions), and the field supervisors.

(h) The same combination of factors, plus a traditional legalistic approach to administration, tends to favour formal (and easier) solutions to problems over creative, progressive ones and to prejudice the administrator against development plans, which by definition will change the rules.

On the situation of the administrative personnel

(a) Personnel problems are obscured by the lack of a recognized typology of the widely differing kinds of professional staff, which require different rules regarding appointment, promotion, and career conditions generally. The common practice is to class together, in the same administrative grid and under the same rules, those who are in charge as well as pedagogical experts, technicians specialized in complementary disciplines, and the strictly administrative staff in charge of support services common to any Government department.

(b) This confusion, which arises from uncritical acceptance of the old idea that everyone in the educational system is basically a teacher, has led to a dysfunctional structure of administrative careers, i.e. wrong entrance requirements, dead-end posts, priority to seniority over ability, indefinite tenure of posts of authority, and so on. The overall effect is a sort of administrative sclerosis, a hardening of the administrative arteries which makes any prospective changes extremely difficult.

(c) The basic training brought to their posts by line administrators and pedagogical experts is that of primary and secondary teachers, perhaps with some refresher or advanced courses. Their experience normally includes lesser administrative duties, but they are selected, at least for their first administrative appointment, according to their merits ('puntaje') as teachers. No specific training in management is required, as if directing professional and auxiliary staff demanded the same qualities as teaching. Remedial in-service courses are slight in content and do not really cover two essential areas: the socio-economic context of education (treated at most as very general ideas), and psychosocial training adapted to bureaucratic management. Altogether, this situation does not favour a proper understanding of, nor a very effective participation in, the development planning process.

(d) Specialists in complementary disciplines (psychology, economics, sociology, statistics, etc.), who become much more important when development plans are being prepared, are brought into educational administration without the benefit of any induction course or period which would help them

adjust their particular discipline or technique to the educational world; hence the frequent misunderstandings with the rest of the staff and the little practical value of some of their work.

(e) Officers in charge of common support services (finance, personnel, supplies, and the like) generally come from the ranks of teachers, so that, besides lacking the basic notions of development-oriented administration, they do not possess the specific techniques of their particular job, which they must acquire by trial and error along the way. This might explain the extreme inefficiency of the logistic services.

(f) Appointments to responsible administrative posts, especially those in the line of command, are done either arbitrarily (by political allegiance or personal contacts, to which ability takes second place), or by technocratic procedures, taking into account professional merits but ignoring leadership qualities. Having no say in the matter, subordinates tend to be critical of their chiefs and are little disposed to follow their leadership beyond strictly obligatory matters.

(g) The basic attitude of educational administrators is the same as in any other public bureaucracy: a conservative, legalistic approach to problems; reliance on precedent as a substitute for thought; evasion of responsibilities when faced with new problems or difficult decisions - all of which reinforces the centralistic, authoritarian tendencies of the system. This attitude is rooted in the customs of well-established nations, which tend to neglect wider development prospects, and interdisciplinary contacts.

(h) Thus, in the face of a planning process aimed at change and development, the ordinary administrator's attitude is made up of mistrust towards its initiators, annoyance at being disturbed in his habits, and scepticism based on experience of past failures. Except for the small group of planners and friends of the Minister's, the unreserved cooperation of other officers can only be obtained through strong leadership supported by well-founded arguments. Otherwise only half-hearted participation will be obtained from people who do not want to commit themselves too far and wish to keep a low profile in case of future political changes.

(i) Indeterminate tenure of administrative posts leads to long periods of office after which administrators tend to forget their experience of field-work conditions and problems. This is a main factor

contributing to the lack of response of educational administration to the need for change.

On the regional and local organization

(a) 'Regional' administration offices, which were originally set up between the school districts and the Ministry merely to facilitate communication and control, are more and more regarded as instruments for decentralizing the management of the school system. However, with few exceptions, regional offices still have jurisdiction only over primary schools and their decision-making powers are strictly limited to non-essential matters. The management of secondary and technical schools, of adult education centres and of other types of establishments is subject to direct control from the Ministry and any decision involving use of funds, curriculum change or assignment of personnel must come from, or at least be previously confirmed by, the Ministry's offices.

(b) A further obstacle to the regional directorates playing a substantial role in promoting educational change for the development of the region is the fact that their territorial boundaries do not coincide with the regional sub-divisions of other Government agencies, so that coordinated action becomes very difficult.

(c) Thus, at the regional and local levels, there is not one educational system, i.e. an interconnected network of several types of schools, but several independent systems (the primary, the secondary, the technical..) each one with its individual authority with different administrative structures and procedures, and lacking working contacts with each other. The consistency of a national plan is lost when it is implemented in the field.

(d) Individual schools are organized to teach only according to nation-wide rules, even though insufficient resources seriously restrict their effectiveness, especially in rural areas. They are not, even in principle, organized to plan their own development, or at least to do the necessary team-work to adjust national planning directives to their particular situations. The main obstacle to this is the legal framework, which does not permit any duties to the staff except actual teaching.

(e) The most promising organizational development at this level seems to be the 'nuclear' concept, under which the schools of a limited area become a comprehensive unit offering all types of formal and out-of-school education. These are linked to vocational training and adapted to the local needs of a community that fully participates in the process and works

in coordination with local representatives of other development agencies. To ensure the success of such a scheme a large number of laws, regulations and administrative procedures and customs need to be drastically changed, so as to give concrete expression to the principles of decentralization and participation. But the required changes are of such magnitude that the success of nuclear organization has not yet been made possible.

On the organization of the inspectorate

(a) The inspectors or supervisors of primary school districts are the vital link between decision-makers and field operatives within the educational system as it exists. From the beginning they were assigned an intermediate role as faithful carriers of orders and controllers of implementation. But nowadays they are asked to perform other roles, such as two-way (not simply top-to-bottom) communicators, and as second-degree decision-makers together with their directors at the regional level. These are partly conflicting roles that have blurred the clarity of the inspector's profile and lessened his effectiveness.

(b) Besides the above three-fold administrative role, supervisors are also now asked to perform a pedagogic function of a new kind, i.e. offering technical guidance to teachers and headmasters. This has to be done not in the ad-hoc, desultory way as previously, but systematically, in the context of socio-educational development. To fulfil this role they either lack professional authority (as younger teachers are apt to have received better training than them), or, if they possess the expertise, their hierarchical power interferes with the frankness of dialogue that would be necessary for useful counselling.

(c) In addition to all these substantive tasks, the inspector has to deal with the very large amount of paperwork involved as the only field officer for each of the departments of the Ministry. This overwhelming accumulation of disparate duties, besides making it extremely difficult for him to fulfil them all properly, prevents him finding a unifying centre for his activities and a satisfactory definition of his place in the system. He is variously a chief, a secretary, an operative, a public relations officer, an expert counsellor, an accountant, a surveyor, an emissary, an investigative reporter, a trouble-shooter, and so on and so forth.

(d) No special training is legally required for appointments to such incredibly complex posts. Ordinary teacher training and experience, and

(not always) some experience as headmaster, are supposed to be enough at the start. Later, some short courses are provided. However, these belated training activities suffer from the lack of definition of the inspector's role, and usually they emphasize certain components and neglect others.

(e) The inspector's effectiveness is further eroded, and very particularly in rural areas, by the lack of infrastructure and services of any kind (premises, transportation, secretariat, equipment, means of communication, etc.). The reluctance of central authorities to provide these resources, which is clearly shown in the annual budgets, stems from a mistaken assessment of priorities, based on the original conception of the inspector as a mere delegate or intermediary with no authority of his own.

(f) At the secondary level, inspectors have a simpler role: that of controlling teachers' performances by subject according to prescribed curricula and methodology - and, subsidiarily, having a look at the school's general operation. This concentration on specific subject-matter obviously does not help to correct the substantial problems of secondary education. The appointment of psychological and vocational 'counsellors' can be no more than a palliative. When a reform is proposed, there is no one at the intermediate level to explain its whole purpose to the schools.

(g) The inspectors' main activity, their annual round of school visits, is largely ineffective because of the superficiality of such contacts, given the large number of schools per inspector, the shortness of the school year, and (in rural areas) the amount of time spent in travelling. During a typical visit there is time only to check the outward aspects of school life, especially compliance with administrative regulations. Little time remains for discussion of actual educational issues, and still less for jointly assessing the school's activities in relation to local development.

(h) The meetings or 'concentrations' of teachers and headmasters, conducted by the supervisor (alone, or assisted by Ministry officials) offer a better opportunity for dealing with pedagogic matters in a professional atmosphere. Regular meetings of the supervisor with the school directors sometimes become a very effective, though unofficial 'executive board' at the district level. But there is a danger of the inspector using these meetings for his own, purely administrative ends and, in any case, they cannot replace individual visits to each school.

(i) Because of all these problems, when the inspectors (individually and as a body) have to fulfil a critical function in the process of implementation of national plans, they are not always quite convinced of the plan's worth, their professional abilities fall short of needs, their organization is too poor, and the resources at their disposal are quite inadequate for the task. This level of educational administration is then the greatest practical hindrance for plan implementation and success.

On the administrative aspects of the planning process

(a) The true role of the central Educational Planning Unit, in the context of a planning process involving the whole administration, is still not clearly understood. This office is either given a virtual monopoly over all planning and programming activities, or is reduced to fulfilling strictly technical tasks, such as quantitative calculations. In both cases, the consequence is uncertainty about its location in the organizational framework, which is very damaging to the quality of its relationships with the rest of the Ministry.

(b) The resulting isolation of the Planning Unit within the Ministry weakens the willingness of other Departments to adopt the plan as one of their concerns, prevents any substantial contribution to planning on their part, and impairs the collective sense of participating in an enterprise which deserves the maximum efforts of all.

(c) The single most effective mechanism for participatory planning inside the Ministry, as well as for unified day-to-day management of its different sectors, is the regular meeting of the most senior officers under the Minister himself. This type of organization is seldom employed, however, which explains the low level of coordination of practical activities and the weakness of the general drive towards reform.

(d) Lack of clarity about the Planning Unit's role is also reflected in the composition of its staff, and particularly in the balance between those specifically trained for planning and other social-science professionals. The latter lack a systematic introduction to educational issues, which makes dialogue between them and their colleagues very difficult and weakens the practicality of their contributions.

(e) Planning teams also suffer from an imbalance between adequate capability to discuss the wider issues of education in relation to development prospects, and their much weaker mastery of specific techniques,

whether for giving the plan a strong and clear-cut structure, or for building a consistent set of quantitative goals.

(f) Radically innovative solutions, which may arouse enthusiasm and participation, are often nullified by a premature, exaggerated preoccupation with budgetary constraints, coupled with a lack of imagination to devise alternative ways of using available funds.

(g) The weakness of psycho-social training and insights on the part of planning team members leads to difficulties in their relationship with the rest of the administration, and to neglecting the organization of true participation at all levels of the system. Consequently, teachers, students and parents tend to feel that they are manipulated, and the necessary goodwill for effective implementation of plans is hard to obtain.

3. What can be suggested

While only careful research can ascertain the precise degree to which the problems listed above affect individual countries, the existence of the problems themselves is undeniable in nearly every case. Thus it may not seem too pretentious to try and put forward some suggestions as to the likely cures for these ills. Indeed, a number of the 'conclusions' just stated can in fact be considered as suggestions or recommendations, by simply substituting the imperative for the present tense - or its negative form.

However, it would be useful to enlarge upon a few points among those which the previous analysis has shown as crucial. In some cases, the suggestions will be nothing new: they will merely insist on taking real action about some issues on which all concerned say they agree - but which are never really translated into practice. But in addition, other rather unconventional solutions will be proposed, which may sound surprising or even odd; but they are simply the logical consequence of doing away with some obsolete concepts or practices which are still accepted just because they were valid in the past. If, however, such out of date practices do not accord with the main trends of modern social life or with modern administrative principles, and - most of all - have undesirable consequences for the implementation of development activities, then the only solution is to sweep them away.

Given the nature of this study, propositions cannot be fully developed for immediate adoption anywhere. They should be seen rather as

alternatives to some of the present methods of administrations of education which have been amply proven to be inefficient. However, they would have to be carefully studied with all their systemic consequences in the context of any particular country before being put to the test.

(a) The organizational structure of Ministries of Education may not be, objectively speaking, the main problem for plan implementation. However, structures affect attitudes and procedures which influence decentralisation and participation and, being one of the permanent worries in virtually every Ministry - as frequent 'reorganizations' clearly demonstrate - they are a good point of entry for a more comprehensive reform.

It is not appropriate to discuss organizational charts and their respective merits or demerits here, but we should emphasize a couple of basic criteria which have serious implications for a development-minded administration. As our point of departure, we can refer back to (Ch. IV, pp.88-89 the mixture which is usually found of 'horizontal' departments in charge of each school level, and 'vertical' ones, based on the several functions to be carried out for the whole system. While in theory any of the two principles can result in logically sound structures, one cannot be indifferent as to which one chooses for development purposes. The traditional organization (Directorates for primary, secondary, technical, adult education ...), if logically pursued, will only reinforce the tendency to what amounts in practice to <u>several</u> ministries, each with its own geographical network, having in common only the general administrative services (budget, personnel, supplies ...)- and even the latter are subdivided internally by level. As a consequence, ensuring the harmonious development of integrated educational services in the field becomes next to impossible. In such a context, even when regional directors are given authority over all school levels, they receive separate (and disparate) instructions from the various ministerial departments, and cannot really manage the field services in their region as a unified system.

If educational development requires, among other things, that <u>the public in each area</u> should have at its disposal a complete, interrelated array of educational opportunities, this situation cannot be allowed to continue. Administrative structure will have to be set up based on two complementary principles: <u>management by function</u> at the central level and real <u>decentralization</u> for integrated management of all educational

opportunities at regional and sub-regional levels. The central offices should retain only the overall functions necessary to guide the system's development according to national needs (1), and not actually control schools. This change alone would considerably reduce the almost unmanageable size of Ministries.

These considerations lead us one step further. It is imperative that a basic organizational conception, which still lingers on in virtually every Ministry, should be explicitly discarded: that is the idea that educational administration is primarily concerned with maintaining the system and that planning and development activities are an addition to this. Older things are considered more essential and newer creations are secondary. Thus, the Ministry's departments are unconsciously viewed as distributed in three concentric circles: to the inner one belong inspection and control as well as the common administrative services; to the second, the offices concerned with pedagogic matters and counselling; to the outer one (the farthest from the core) the planning and development units. 'Development' administration takes of course the opposite view, and such a development-oriented attitude on the part of administrators has to be sustained by a completely different structure of the various services. In this case the administrative structure of the Ministry of Education must take as its point of departure the function of planning and development.

It might be objected that this amounts to the disappearance of the Ministry of Education and its place being taken by a Ministry of Educational Development. But this is not the case, for the complementary functions of maintenance and control will always be necessary, it being understood that the main object is the development of the system, i.e. its continuous change towards increased responsiveness to social needs. Its structure must reflect this hierarchy of functions and secondary functions (inspection and control) will be mainly left to lesser, decentralised offices.

On the whole, the application of these ideas would result in the Ministry of Education having a much lighter structure. This could only increase its capabilities for carrying through development programmes that

(1) Including research on and development of basic curricula, books and instructional materials. Their production and distribution must remain centralised for the most part, not only as an economic necessity (economies of scale), but mainly as the most effective way of ensuring the fundamental unity of the system.

are so often tied down by the sheer ponderousness of a too heavy machinery.

(b) The crucial role of field supervision, and its critical state today, have been sufficiently discussed in previous pages, so that the corresponding suggestions can now be presented without much further justification. The decisive change in this area would consist of distributing the present responsibilities assigned to field supervisors into three main parts, approximately as follows:

(i) Most of the paperwork required by the various departments of the Ministry should be entrusted to an administrative officer, or unit, located in each regional or sub-regional headquarters. Although this officer could occasionally pay a visit to one or two schools, his role would be strictly bureaucratic. The necessary information for filling in the papers would flow to and from the schools through different channels, according to circumstances, i.e. telephone, post, radio linkings, special carriers, the inspectors themselves as carriers in their rounds ... The point is that supervisors should not be tied to their desks for any significant proportion of their time. And with a specialized officer in charge, the paperwork would be of a more consistent quality.

(ii) On-the-spot control of compliance with existing regulations in each school will always be necessary. This would be the responsibility of inspectors or supervisors proper, together with surveys and reporting on all kinds of material conditions (state and needs of premises, furniture, equipment, instructional materials, the teachers' living conditions, etc.), plus perhaps, arrangements for community participation. Limited to these aspects, and free from paperwork, the inspectors could probably cover a larger area - perhaps two or three of the present average districts. With a modest amount of supplementary training, they could inspect all levels and types of schools, thus becoming an element of gradual integration of the local network of educational institutions. Furthermore, they would be easily interchangeable, not only because of the 'impersonal' type of inspection conceived, but also because they could all operate from the same base, the regional headquarters.

(iii) Finally, the advisory services on substantive educational matters - the most important element for the purposes of development - should be entrusted to a new kind of official, the 'asesor' (the Spanish word being more precise than the English 'adviser' or 'counsellor'). From

the few experiences gained in this direction (1), it would seem that each region (or sub-region, according to size) should have, not a series of independent advisers, but a team of them. Some would be 'generalists', i.e. experts in pedagogical matters as such (including new methodologies, evaluation techniques, school planning, and so on) while the others would specialize in curricular or extracurricular areas of activity. They would visit schools by twos or threes, staying for about a week in each one so as to get to know its daily nature and to have time for the multiplicity of individual and group activities that, taken altogether, would really make a durable impact on education in the school. Nevertheless, each adviser should have some sort of special responsibility towards a specific group of schools (district or nucleus?), so that the teachers and headmasters would have a particular contact at regional level. Nothing (except perhaps distance in some cases) would prevent the members of the advisory team setting up residence in the particular district for which they are responsible, provided they can come regularly to headquarters and participate in team visits to other districts.

Although such districts would have to be smaller than the present ones (some 20 schools in rural areas would be the limit), this system would scarcely allow for in-depth visits such as we have outlined to every school each year. But, the impact of such visits would be immeasurably deeper and longer-lasting in the intervals the school staff could be sufficiently supported by means of regular 'concentrations', or meetings of the type already described (Ch. IV, pp. 120). These meetings would, on the other hand, be considerably richer in content and of greater practicality due to the better experience of the advisory team.

To make it quite clear, these teams would perhaps not at the start cover, as in the case of inspectors, both primary and secondary levels, general and vocational streams, adult education centres, etc, but would eventually so as their composition gradually became more complete through the incorporation of different kinds of expertise. Moreover, the sharp distinctions between the school sub-systems would tend to become less pronounced under the kind of decentralization and structural rearrangements advocated in previous paragraphs. In quite a number of countries already, the adoption of nine-year 'general basic education' demands this type of mixed

(1) Cf. remarks on Peru, Ch. IV, p.110.

advisory team. Diversified secondary education (2nd cycle of this level) would also greatly benefit from the advice of multi-disciplinary teams, whose members, in this case, should all hold higher level diplomas, and could deal with more than one region according to the number of schools of this level.

Of course, virtually no country is in a position to establish such a supervisory organization all at once, and it would be very dangerous to attempt to do so: the whole idea could collapse if pushed too quickly. This system should be phased in very carefully, according to a programme established by the planning office, the main consideration being a good initial training for the members of each regional team. But, once initiated, the change should be completed within a few years, otherwise it would give rise to unnecessary tensions within the system.

The main objection to a scheme of this type would probably be on the basis of cost: the numbers of personnel of the supervisory category would approximately double, the salaries would have to be increased, some secretarial personnel would be needed, office and communications equipment would have to be provided, as well as transportation facilities, and travel allowances would considerably increase. This is an extra reason for introducing the scheme in a gradual way, but not for discarding it. The basic issue is one of priorities and of placing the cost increase in its proper context. As has been noted already, Latin American educational systems are not desperately poor; their problem is rather the inefficient, sometimes wasteful use of money - and this can be corrected if the right priorities are adopted. In a region having, say, one thousand teachers distributed in ten districts with three hundred schools, plus two or three hundred secondary teachers in some twenty high schools, plus all the corresponding services, an increase in the supervisory-level staff from one to two dozen is really marginal to the overall budget. And, if this marginal increase is what will achieve the transformation from inefficient schooling to truly developmental education (i.e. between wasteful and profitable use of money), there is really no justification for not making the extra effort.

(c) G. Tamayo, in his survey of some 'nuclearization' experiences in Latin America (1), unexpectedly asks a fundamental question which is seldom

(1) G. Tamayo Peña, "La nuclearizacion educativa: reflexiones sobre las experiencias de Colombia, Guatemala y Peru"; UNESCO, Guatemala, 1976 (mimeogr.), p. 38.

openly stated: 'How could we do away with the police-like hierarchy of fear ("la jerarquia caporalista de miedo") which characterises many school systems?' We have already analysed (Ch.IV. pp. 79-81) the main reasons for this undercurrent of timidity and fear throughout the educational hierarchy: the officers in the chain of command are appointed (a) without the participation of future subordinates, and (b) hold their posts for an indefinite period of time, which ends only with retirement or a further promotion. Thus, whatever power they wield over the heads of their subordinates is not tempered by any sense of responsibility towards them, nor by the knowledge that in a foreseeable future the respective positions may be reversed. Therefore, the suggestions we make here are very simple, as well as truly revolutionary in the ordinary context of Latin American administration: the posts of command (1) should be rotated at fixed periods, and they should be elective, at least in the sense that future subordinates have some substantial participation in the selection of the incumbents.

The principle of rotation of line administrators should not in theory stir up much opposition, at least in self-proclaimed democratic societies where fixed-term renewal of political authorities is the rule. The principle should be extended, in educational administration, to advisory posts as well. In both cases, indeterminate tenure creates indifference to real-life situations and problems and has a negative effect on the scientific approach to issues. However, the proposal of rank-and-file participation in the appointment of directors of departments will arouse a strong reaction. The opposition, though, will spring not so much from doctrinal tenets as from deeply-ingrained habits which view the educational system as if it were an army ... Of course, the educational system is not a political body either, so that we do not advocate 'universal' voting nor 'open' candidacies. Certain academic and technical qualifications would be set as prerequisites for candidates and the 'constituency' for each post would demand a lot of defining. But, if leadership qualities are the most essential when the administration is committed to vigorous development, and if those

(1) I refer here to the four-category typology suggested in the conclusions concerning the administrative personnel (Ch. V. p. 132, (a). A. Gutierrez and J.F. Bernède ("La formacion de los administradores de la educacion", UNESCO, Guatemala, 1976) propose a careful typology of non-teaching posts with which I basically agree, but since it was devised with a view to training needs, it has important differences to my proposals.

qualities cannot be evaluated except through human and professional contacts and certainly they cannot be so judged by perusal of the Personnel Department files! - the conclusion is inescapable: future subordinates, who are the current equals of the candidates, are the most likely to make a good choice.

The remaining objections have no real weight against these considerations. For instance, it might be said that politics would invade the educational establishment. But it is already there and is more the politics of vested interests, than of the 'workers' in education. Elections might foster political rivalries among the staff, but group struggles for power already exist; participation in decisions would take them into the open and create a healthier situation. Choices might sometimes fall on the least 'qualified' candidates. This may be so from an academic standpoint, but is not widely-recognized leadership a more desirable 'quality' than strictly professional abilities for these kinds of posts? 'Elected' officials might feel independent of their superiors, not accountable to them. Accountability is not a very popular or well-enforced notion in Latin American systems: we have already noted that disciplinary measures are rare. Apart from this, election to a post does not mean that exercise of duties is not subjected to rules, which at least in financial matters are usually pretty stringent and controlled by bodies outside and above the Ministry of Education. In short, a system of appointments where the rank and file has effective participation may not produce the best of results, but it will be vastly superior to the system we have at present.

One might also put forward the argument that since educational systems are making steady progress towards being truly professional organizations, there is no reason why they should not adopt for appointments to management posts a system similar to that of many Universities - the professional bodies 'par excellence' - where professors, together with representatives of the students and the general administrators, elect the directors, the deans and the Rector himself, for fixed periods of time. Of course, in a system like the Army a colonel cannot go back to lieutenant duties but in the University, a former Dean returns (often with relief) to teaching and research activities, as a quite natural occurrence. Which should be the model for educational systems?

(d) Let us now turn to the planning process itself, i.e. the system of actions that must be actuated and coordinated by the expert planning groups. From the point of view of ultimate implementation of plans, this process calls for some remarks and suggestions on a few points that do not usually get satisfactory attention.

The most critical point is the question of linking educational plans with the overall development of the country. This affects implementation at the very base of the system, that is, the individual schools, since it is their daily activities (and theirs alone) which will or will not exert influence on the students and the community as regards effective development. The 'overall development process' and 'the educational contribution to it' are just words, until they materialize in teacher-student-community actions. This may not be so clearly perceived in urban contexts, where the overlapping of thousands of specific actions is so baffling that their particular effects cannot be identified in the resulting texture of society. But in many rural areas, which are considerably simpler in their social and economic structures, the specific interrelationships of school and life are often identifiable with an acceptable degree of precision.

How, then, is educational action to be linked to concrete development - assuming that the country <u>has</u> defined the directions of its development? My contention is that educational planners should concentrate on the <u>social</u> implications of the national plan rather than on its specific <u>economic</u> objectives. As this is contrary to the most prevalent school of thought among planners, some justifications are called for.

It should be remembered first that here we are dealing with the formal education system as embodied in a school network, and not with every activity that can be called 'education'. Economic development can expect support from the school system in 'the development of human resources', but this expression is dangerously ambiguous. The most popular interpretation considers it to be synonymous with 'manpower training', or the preparation of people for different trades and specialties required in modern economies based on the forecast of manpower needs. Such an interpretation is popular because of its concrete character and its (deceptive) simplicity, but in view of the accelerated pace of technological economic change it imposes a task that the schools cannot do. Specific training for specific occupations, at lower and middle levels (the higher level is the preserve of

Universities) can only be done by flexible, ad-hoc organizations, able to do very different things in different places, and to change their programmes at very short notice. Instead, the role of the school proper is to make people trainable, not trained (1).

The contribution to human resources development which the formal school might really be able to make is something much more general, but not less important: the acquisition of cultural background and of learning skills that will enable people, among other things, to learn a trade or a profession, to adjust to different jobs, to understand their role in the economy, etc. This is very slow work indeed, and has to be done throughout the so-called 'formative' years, and for this the school is, or should be, adequately equipped. It is obvious that this task, which in the modern world is supposed to take between ten and fifteen years, cannot be framed according to the changing economic orientations of a national plan. Its terms of reference should be based instead on the social aims of the plan. Social aims are considerably more stable than economic objectives because they are developed from a philosophy which delineates a desired type of person and society. This means that Governments (and planners) commit a very serious mistake when they try to subordinate educational plans to short-term economic views, though the latter are often the final arbiter of national development. From a more practical angle, it is most unlikely that a school plan centred on, or heavily influenced by, manpower needs, would arouse much enthusiasm among teachers, who - at least in Latin America - are imbued with quite a different philosophy.

(e) In connection with these remarks, it is strongly suggested that, in the initial stages of planning, a widespread process of consultation and open discussion should be launched, not on particular measures or proposals, but precisely in order to ascertain which educational issues are felt to be most relevant to development, i.e. what planning should be about. The discussions should be fed by dissemination of precise factual information provided by the planning services, in order to avoid idle and purely ideological arguments. However, the discussion must be free and ample enough for the

(1) This of course poses a serious dilemma for 'technical' schools of the formal secondary level: whether they should train students in broad technical areas which would be followed by further training elsewhere for specific jobs, or attempt this specific training themselves with a complex organization which would have difficulty in adjusting to rapidly changing needs.

decision-makers to be able to evaluate likely opposition and devise their strategy before they commit themselves to particular reforms. They should not be afraid that they will lose through such public discussions their freedom to adopt what they really consider as the best decisions; after all, no consultations of an open kind ever point to single, unequivocal conclusions. But they will certainly find by this method a number of ideas and alternatives which would never have come to light otherwise. In addition, the likelihood of the eventual plan really being carried out will considerably increase.

(f) If the communication and information system is the life and blood of an organization as many authors suggest, it is no wonder that so many educational systems are in such bad health ... We have touched on this problem several times (e.g. Ch.III,p.82-83) but its technical aspects are beyond the scope of this paper. Here we must emphasize once again that the success of both the preparation and the implementation of plans are so dependent on this system that the overhauling of the communications network and information services should be the most urgent preoccupation of planners. Quite a number of other issues are closely connected with this one: the simplification of the central structure, dencentralization to the periphery, the equipping of regional and local offices, the appointment of field advisers in whom teachers can confide - and the whole participation structure, including the holding of regular staff meetings at all levels, beginning with the Minister himself (see Ch.II. pp.42). Indeed, a complete plan of administrative reform could well be built around this issue, which would give interesting advantages from a strategic point of view, i.e. the communications approach would lead to far-reaching and very practical changes in administrative methods, without openly attaching any personal blame to administrators for previous inefficient procedures.

(g) Although references to financial problems have been only marginal in this paper, a suggestion should be made here in regard to educational budgets, or rather to the spirit in which their annual preparation should be undertaken. As generally known, the education budget is among the tightest because of the labour-intensive character of this 'industry'. Salaries take up usually 80 or 90 per cent of total expenditure, so that manoeuvrability for developmental purposes is very small. The tendency, when drafting the annual budget, is therefore to carry over the previous year's current expenditure, with whatever provision for inflation is deemed adequate, and

then calculate the balance which could be used for development programmes. Of course, small sums only come out of such an exercise.

The whole procedure should be radically different. The first rational step should be to revise the structure of the budget, in such a way that it reflects the view that development is not something added to the usual operational programmes, but is incorporated internally (1). Development goals should be integrated so that all budgetary programmes become development programmes, the budget ceases to be an instrument for repeating last year's actions with a few additions, and becomes a tool for integral - if gradual - renovation of the whole system. The close scrutiny required for such integration would surely reveal wastages that if eliminated would make the money go further. But the main point is that this kind of budget will provide the Ministry of Education with much stronger and more convincing arguments, for its discussions with the financial authorities, than the usual piecemeal, 'beggar's list' approach.

(h) Finally, let us restate in an orderly way the different suggestions about the training of educational administrators that have cropped up at different points of this study:

(i) As a precondition for establishing any comprehensive training system, each country should adopt, after careful study, a definite typology of non-teaching posts (above those of a menial nature), and define the main categories within each type and the different possibilities of transfer and promotion. An important part of this work would be drawing up the rules governing appointments and tenure, according to types and categories. In effect, this amounts to establishing a consistent system of careers in educational administration, something which, I venture to say, no country in Latin America has at this point, however complicated their system of personnel may be.

(ii) The above definitions would make it possible to identify the type of training (and of diplomas - but this should be rather flexible) that would be required for candidates to the first level of each type of administrative post, and the combinations of experience and further

(1) I know that this approach is elementary when using PPBS, or a reasonable approximation to it, and that many Latin American governments have officially adopted it for years. However, adoption is an outward form only: the structure of the budget is scarcely affected, and bears no relation to measurable objectives.

training demanded for promotion to higher posts. When stating these professional requirements, care should be taken not to give undue emphasis either to seniority or to formal diplomas, to the detriment of real abilities and especially of leadership qualities.

(iii) This work being finished, it should not be excessively difficult to negotiate with Universities or with special institutions which train educational personnel, in order to set up the corresponding programmes (from diploma to short refresher courses). This will be easier if such higher education institutions have participated in the previous process of definition.

(iv) When devising curricula for such training activities, it is of paramount importance to organize them to achieve changes of attitude necessary for managing a school system which gives relevant formal education based on the analysis of real needs of the country.

(v) In view of the paucity of experience in this type of training, particular care should be taken not to draft too rigid legal provisions regarding the formal modalities of training for each type and category of post. A large measure of flexibility has to be preserved in order that the responsible training institutions can constantly improve their offerings according to experience.

(vi) Although the Ministries themselves should establish some institutions of their own for this type of training, especially the shorter courses following basic diplomas, it would be dangerous for them to monopolise further training. The exclusion of University requirements could easily lead to lowering of the quality of training, or to the making of exceptions in favour of certain individuals or groups.

x x x

Administrative reform should be, not just an addition to, but a component of every plan of educational development. Theoretically it should even be considered a precondition; in practice, however, this type of reform will not carry any convincing weight outside the context of substantive educational programmes. Any administrative change, implying a change in attitudes, progressive steps towards decentralization and participation, and a streamlining of structures and procedures, is a very arduous process, and therefore needs to be motivated by the prospect of making substantial progress in education as such.

This does not mean that a programme of administrative reform should be tailored to fit only the particular set of educational changes that are envisaged in a given stage of developmental planning. Ideally, it should exceed the immediate needs by a certain margin, so that a second stage of substantive programmes can later be initiated in better administrative conditions. These new programmes will motivate a second round of administrative improvements and so on and so forth. In short, a dynamic process of 'cumulative circular causation', to adopt Gunnar Myrdal's vocabulary, should purposely be set in motion from the start. With this object in view, the planning team must from the beginning have a clear idea of the global situation (as regards both education and administration) that they want to reach in the long run. Only in this way can a strategy of step-by-step changes be devised and carried out effectively.

Modern administrative techniques and procedures have been dealt with elsewhere in detail and are the subject of a large bibliography. What we would wish to emphasize here is the comprehensive strategy within which individual modernizing actions should find their place. Such a strategy requires, of course, a sustained and intelligent commitment to change at the political level. The latter is the indispensable solid rock on which all educational development must be built and nobody can guarantee that it will be present in a particular country at a given time. But, when this condition exists, the suggestions made in this study will help.

Or so the author hopes.